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# The History of Painting

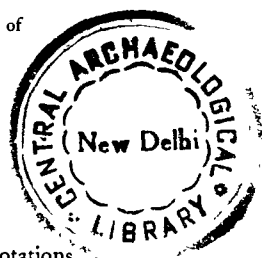
From the Fourth to the Early  
Nineteenth Century

By

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Modern Painting," etc.

Authorised English Edition



Translated from the German and Edited with Annotations

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## **Book 11**

### **The Renaissance**

*( Continued )*



## Chapter VI

### The Union of the Styles

#### 1. Raphael

THE acquisitions of those who extended the bounds of the empire are inherited by those who come after them. As in the middle of the fifteenth century Gozzoli had adopted the results of the investigations of Castagnor and Uccello, and all the achievements of the next generation were used by Ghirlandajo; so the great *profiteur* of the sixteenth century is named Raphael.

In examining Raphael's portraits of himself one indeed feels a certain personal element of his style. This youth with the intelligent, sympathetic features, the bare neck, and the long artist's locks; with the pure, soft girlish eyes like those of Perugino's Madonnas, corresponds to Vasari's picture of Raphael's personality: "Every evil humour vanished when his comrades saw him, every low thought fled from their minds; and this was because they felt themselves vanquished by his affability and beautiful nature."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Although this translation is a condensation of the well-known passage in Vasari, it embodies the essential sense.—ED.

As he himself experienced nothing sad, so his art is one of sunny joyfulness. As his life was passed without storms, without catastrophes, so he never painted thrilling or convulsive pictures. Even when the subject is terrible, or violently dramatic, he remains mild and soft, pleasing and friendly. As his portrait has more a typical than an individual effect, so in his paintings everything individual is either eliminated or changed into the typical. As he never had conflicts either with his employers or with his assistants, but was as pliant and lovable in obeying as in giving orders, so there are no dissonances in his art. Everything that is hard and angular in nature is softened and rounded; and not only the individual forms but the composition moves in pliant, rhythmic lines. As his own life was a beautiful harmony, so his paintings fuse the gay many-sidedness of life into soft harmonies in which no movement or fold of drapery disturbs the pleasing unison.

But another side of his being is expressed in the portrait of himself. This handsome cavalier was no brooder over problems; he never knew the anxious hours of doubt which genius experiences. Instead of giving he receives; instead of the manly creative power his most prominent characteristic is a feminine element, the appreciation of work accomplished by others. Only in this manner can the enormous number of works which he created during a short lifetime be explained. The most receptive artistic nature that ever existed, he seizes all the threads in his hand, and

shapes what individual geniuses had created into new stylistic unity. Here Perugino or Leonardo, there Fra Bartolommeo or Sebastiano, there again Michelangelo or a Greek sculptor is his source. Only behind the canvas, almost non-existent, stands the beautiful youth of the portrait, smoothing the corners of his models, softening their individuality, and smoothing their abruptness.

His father, Giovanni Santi, possessed before him this eclectic versatility and followed with much adaptability now the Paduan, now the Umbrian school, uniting with the profession of a painter that of an author. With the son this eclecticism became a genial, inherent quality. While Leonardo and Michelangelo in their first works, the *Angel* and the *Holy Family*, displayed their individuality, Raphael devoted his power to mastering the entire development of Italian art from Perugino to Michelangelo. As his first boyish drawings were copies of the pictures of the philosophers which Justus of Ghent had painted in the ducal library of Urbino, so his earliest pictures reflect the works of his Umbrian teacher. The *Madonna* of the Solly Collection, the *Virgin between Sts. Francis and Jerome*, and the *Connestabile Madonna* are essentially Umbrian, and reveal the same soft, sentimental faces with melancholy doves' eyes that Perugino loved. In his first altarpieces likewise he repeats with touching simplicity the models of his master. At the time that Raphael was his apprentice, Perugino had painted a *Crucifixion*,



an *Assumption*, a *Coronation*, and a *Marriage of the Virgin*; and although Raphael treated the same subjects, the effect even at this early period, especially in the *Sposizio*, was more subtle and elegant.

He is also a stranger to the one-sidedness of the Umbrian masters. Where Perugino was only mild and contemplative, Raphael painted dramatic action: St. George plunging upon his white horse through the landscape and swinging his sword against the snorting dragon. He also enlarged the domain of painting in another direction. While Perugino, as the follower of Savonarola, had treated only religious themes, Raphael, who, as in the horse of St. George, copied one of the steeds of the *DioscURI*, was the first Umbrian to return to the domain of the antique. Siena, whither he had come as an assistant to Pinturicchio, possessed one of the most beautiful antique groups known to the sixteenth century, the *Three Graces*, which Raphael copied in a painting now in the Museum of Chantilly. Even more charming in its modest tenderness is the effect of the Umbrian antique in his little painting of *Apollo and Marsyas* in the Louvre. In a third somewhat earlier little picture, the *Choice of Hercules*, he painted the choice which he himself never had to make. In the days of Perugino antiquity and Christianity had been in conflict; but Raphael domesticated both in one household.

After he had thus mastered the painting of his Umbrian home he entered upon the heritage of Florentine

RAPHAEL



LA BELLE GIARDINIÈRE

*Louvre*



art. In the Brancacci Chapel he learned from Masaccio's works the secret of the grand style; in the choir of Santa Maria Novella he studied Ghirlandajo's *Coronation of the Virgin* which served as a model for his frescoes in San Severo, Perugia; and Donatello's relief at Orsanmichele furnished the motive of his *St. George* in the Hermitage. But even more than from the dead, he learned from the living masters. From 1503 to 1506 Leonardo resided at Florence, and Fra Bartolommeo had made it his life-work to demonstrate in his paintings the latter's maxims of linear composition. Raphael, who had been quite Umbrian in the tender *Madonna del Granduca*, now created a series of pictures of the Virgin which are as closely related to Leonardo's *Madonna of the Grotto* as is the *Connestabile Madonna* to Perugino; the best known examples being the *Madonna in the Meadow*, the *Madonna with the Starling*, and the *Belle Jardinière*, in all of which the figures, as in Leonardo's picture, are bounded by an equilateral triangle. From Leonardo also he derived the chubby-cheeked Christ-child with the Praxitelean pose; except that with Raphael, especially in the *Madonna Canigiani*, the calculation in the composition is more conspicuous because the linear arrangements are not softened by the effect of light. His individuality nevertheless is revealed in his type of the Madonna. She is not of heavenly beauty, has nothing of the delicacy of Leonardo, but is only friendly and mild, the true sister of the Raphael whom

we know from his own portrait. He appears as a double of Fra Bartolommeo in his *Madonna del Baldacchino*; and imparts to his portrait of Maddalena Doni the attitude, though not the mysterious charm, of *Mona Lisa*. Finally he succeeded in uniting in a single work, the *Entombment* of the Brera, the characteristics of Perugino, Mantegna, Michelangelo, and Fra Bartolommeo. His studies began with Perugino's *Pietà*, received a new point of view from Mantegna's line engraving of the same subject, and were modified by Michelangelo's statue, from which he adapted the body of Christ, and his *Holy Family*, which furnished the woman seated to the right. Fra Bartolommeo's spirit is revealed in his manner of subordinating the emotional content of the theme to the composition.

His call to Rome was attended by a new change. As in Perugia he had been a soulful Umbrian, and in Florence an apt pupil of Leonardo, he now rises to the "grand style." The solemnity and majesty of the Eternal City streams into his works.

But the *Disputa*, the first of his paintings in the chambers of the Vatican, reveals his connection with the Florentine Raphael. As he adopted numerous figures from Leonardo's *Adoration of the Kings*, so also he followed the principles which the latter had established for the composition of historical paintings. In like manner in his picture of the *Promulgation of the Decretals* the connection with the *quattrocento*,

with Melozzo's *Appointment of Platina*, is evident. From his *School of Athens*, although here too there are many motives from Leonardo's *Adoration*, Melozzo's *Platina*, and Donatello's Paduan reliefs another master seems to speak. It need not be assumed that Bramante furnished him the design; for he painted the ideas of Bramante as Masaccio had those of Brunellesco, and Piero della Francesca those of Leon Battista Alberti. His association with the great architect of Urbino, at that time building structures which announced a new era of architecture, transformed the master of line into a great master of space, into a mighty architect.

The chief picture of the second chamber, the *Expulsion of Heliodorus*, signifies the acme of his development under Bramante's influence. As in the *School of Athens*, a wide hall stretches before us, which, enlivened by few figures, gives an even greater impression of depth. Within this hall an event of stormy dramatic action occurs. Raphael, ten years earlier, so modest and so Umbrian, and so solemn in the *School of Athens*, here surpasses Filippino Lippi in Baroque movement. In another picture of this chamber, the *Liberation of Peter*, he even succeeds in uniting with his mastery of line a glowing colour and gleaming effect of light. Sebastiano del Piombo, who had just at that time arrived in Rome, thus transformed Raphael the Umbrian into a Venetian.

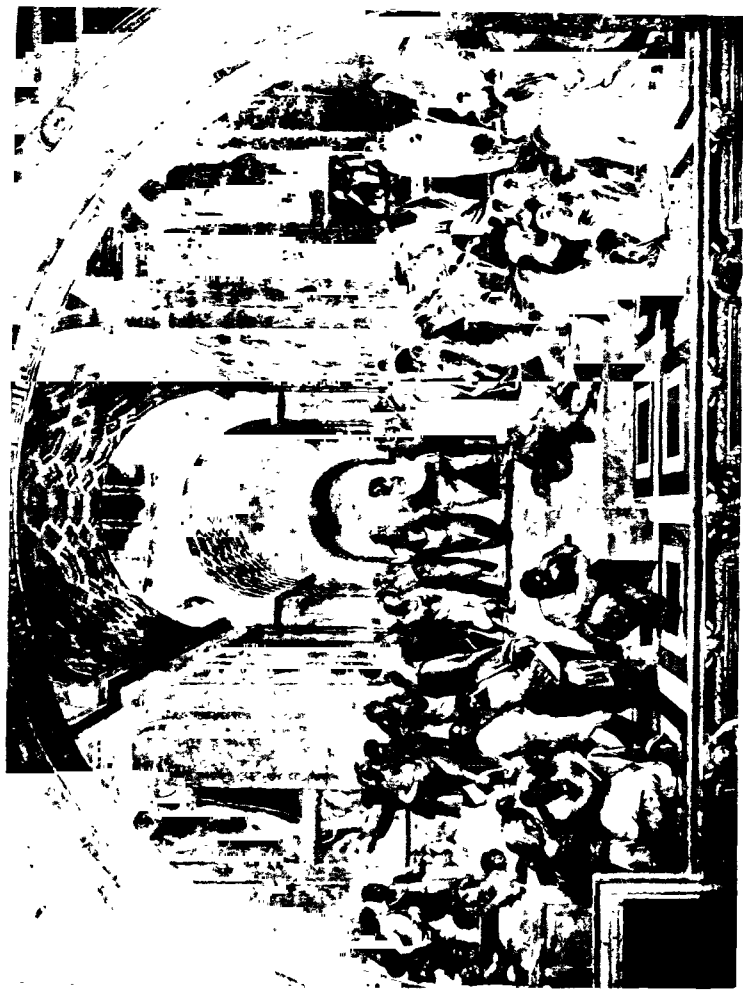
In his following works the personal element dis-

appears even more; for Raphael now assigned the execution of his works to assistants and pupils. A new principle, which is as characteristic for Raphael as for the whole century, is now enforced. The fifteenth century was the age of individualism. All the masters who had laboured in the Sistine Chapel worked independently side by side; and even Michelangelo painted his colossal frescoes without assistance. Raphael, as he himself had yielded his personality to others, now became in his turn a dictator, under whose command an army of lesser masters laboured. The place of individual creations is taken during the *cinquecento* by works which are nothing more than joint achievements of artistic activity.

Beginning with the year 1514, Raphael followed other models. Although he had formerly in his *Entombment* adopted single figures from Michelangelo's paintings, he now created in the *Sibyls* in the church of Santa Maria della Pace a work which seems a translation of Michelangelo's art into the style of Raphael. Michelangelesque is the plastic execution of form and the imposing treatment of drapery; Raphaellesque, the pleasing rhythm of composition, the arrangement, and the gentle manner in which he leads back the titanic creations of Buonarroti to a measured humanity.

But even more than by Michelangelo he was influenced by the antique. Just at that time those celebrated works of antique sculpture were excavated, which until the days of Winckelmann, Lessing, and Goethe

RAPHAEL



THE SCHOOL OF ATHENS  
*Fresco in the Vatican, Rome*





were considered the most perfect revelation of the Hellenic spirit; the *Apollo Belvedere*, the *Sleeping Ariadne*, *Antinous*, and the *Laocoön* group. The baths of Titus revealed the principles of decoration of the late Roman epoch. The museum of the Belvedere was founded, and after Bramante's death, Raphael, his artistic heir, became not only architect of St. Peter's but conservator of antiquities.

The decorations of the Loggie of the Vatican were his first creations in this capacity. The problem was to enliven the ceilings and walls of the corridor of the Vatican palace with pleasing play of line; a commission especially sympathetic to his preference for harmonious form and "optical cantilena." In this joyful Olympian scene, the cupids and birds, the maidens, swinging themselves in garlands of foliage or listening behind dainty columns, festoons and vases, tritons and satyrs, naiads and sphinxes—everything is included that the sixteenth century had adapted from antique works of art; and over it all hovers the *graziosissima grazia* of Raphael himself.

After he had thus in light playfulness done homage to the antique, it won a stylistic influence over him. He is no longer tempted by the solution of problems of space and colour, but composes his pictures of statues. The *Triumph of Galatea* is a characteristic example. Although the motive of the action of the principal figure is derived from a modern work, Leonardo's *Leda*, all the remaining figures, the marine

centaur, the nereids, the triton, and the *putto* with the dolphin, are taken from the antique sarcophagus reliefs. Space and colour appear so indifferent to him that although this is a marine picture he does not paint the water, but lets the figures rise like statues from the dry earth. The neighbouring frescoes of *Psyche* in the Farnesina offer the logical complement. The ceiling frescoes with the *Judgment of the Gods* and the *Marriage of Psyche* resemble a forest of statues suspended in the air, and the figures of the ceiling vaults arise plastic as statues from a void.

His religious pictures are treated in the same plastic style. The principal subject of the third Vatican Chamber depicted how Pope Leo III. extinguished a conflagration by making the sign of the cross. In Raphael's hands the *Burning of the Borgo* is transformed into the destruction of Troy; but even this designation is derived from a group interpreted as *Æneas* and *Anchises*. In truth, the entire painting is a collection of studies; a naked man letting himself down from a wall, another taking up a child, and the wind-blown figure of a woman carrying water. And as there is no psychical, neither is there any external connection among the figures. The whole theme serves to demonstrate certain mathematical principles of form, to juxtapose a few rhythmic and plastic bodies. In the cartoons for the tapestries which are now the pride of the South Kensington Museum, this feeling for the antique is clarified into a serene classicism. They have

been called the Parthenon sculptures of Christian art and this characterisation contains much truth. Those who, like Ruskin, the herald of the Pre-Raphaelites, examine the cartoons with regard to their spiritual content, are offended by the superficial character of Hellenic linear rhythm; but he who does not measure one period of art by another feels that the problem imposed by the sixteenth century was most perfectly solved by Raphael.

That he nevertheless retained a naturalistic power which enabled him to create portraits ranking with Titian's as the greatest products of sixteenth-century portraiture, is a further proof of his astonishing versatility. He achieved the highest in the general amalgamation of styles in the works of his last years, in which a power reappears which had been long forgotten: Christianity.

His earlier Roman Madonnas differ from the Florentine as the *School of Athens* differs from the *Disputa*. A more heroic race of women, majestically built and bold in movement, takes the place of the mild, gentle beings which he formerly painted. The backgrounds are no longer the sloping hills of the valley of the Arno, but the solemn forms of the Roman Campagna, animated by antique ruins and aqueducts. The composition, then laboriously constructed, now becomes, in the midst of the most complicated intricacies, powerful and free. But although a breath of the universal power of the papacy and something of

the majesty of ancient Rome pervades these works, the Christian note is lacking.

Then came the time when Luther nailed his theses to the church door in Wittenberg, and a breath of this religious enthusiasm pulsed through Italy. Fra Bartolommeo's *Entombment*, Titian's *Assumption*, and Sodoma's ecstatic pictures are due to the same sentiment which had moved the world a generation earlier, in the days of Savonarola, the time in which Raphael was born. In the visionary pictures which strike the final chord of his artistic activity, the great style, heretofore so cold and plastic, is warmed and animated by a breath of Christianity, by the same mystic enthusiasm which pulsed through the veins of the lad in Perugino's workshop.

The transition to this later Christian style is represented by *St. Cecilia*, listening like Raphael himself, who for the first time again hears celestial music. It is true that St. Paul is taken from Leonardo's *Adoration* and that the Magdalen resembles the type which occurs in Sebastiano's *St. Chrysostom*. But the rapturous upward glance of St. Cecilia's eyes is new: Perugino is revived and Guido Reni is heralded. For the *Madonna di Foligno*, Leonardo's *Resurrection* was determinative; but the ecstatic head of St. Francis and the burning eyes of the Baptist also show that the Hellene had become a Christian painter. In his *Transfiguration* he goes a step further in the amalgamation of styles: dramatic life, gesticulating hands,

RAPHAEL



POPE JULIUS II.  
*Pitti Gallery, Florence*



and, in the figure of the woman, plastic and antique beauty; above, the head of Christ taken from Leonardo's *Resurrection* combined with an archaic solemnity reminding one of Perugino.

In the Sistine Madonna, although she also was inspired by Leonardo's *Resurrection*, the work of his life vibrates harmoniously in one great accord. All the nobility of the antique is here present; for Mary resembles a majestic antique statue. The arrangement of line is of the most perfect harmony, showing, in spite of the mathematical scheme, no cool calculation. There is an impression of space as if Mary had been wafted from the infinite; a bold colour scheme, and a tender twilight, from which the figures gleam forth as if of gold. Colour, beauty of line, space, composition, and Hellenic nobility of form—all are here united. But something else is added without which all the rest would remain dead: the psychic qualities which far transcend Raphael's usual level. The slender girlish mother of God, enveloped by the air of heaven, approaching in golden æther; the Christ-child staring so solemnly with his great eyes into the infinite: it seems as if not Raphael but Murillo had painted them. The psychic is once more united with formal beauty.

### II. The End of the Renaissance in Italy

In the manner in which he amalgamated the style of most different personalities into a new unity,



Raphael signifies the acme of the efforts of the sixteenth century. For if one wished by a single expression to characterise the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, the former should be called the century of individualism, the latter of centralisation. In the former there existed side by side in Italy a multitude of independent single states, every one of which had a part in history; and everywhere lived rugged and genuine personalities, great in evil as in good. In the *cinquecento* all this ceased. There were no small principalities or *condottieri*, but only one great native power in all Italy—the States of the Church. In the north a mighty empire had been founded upon whose domain the sun never set.<sup>1</sup> The same spirit of centralisation prevailed in art.

As formerly every province of Italy had produced its artists, now Rome, the capital of the land, also became the centre of art. Few painters were born there; they came from the most distant regions and the most different countries of the peninsula. But they all streamed to Rome because they believed that upon the soil of the Eternal City the highest art could be produced. A single style pervades all that they have to say. The masters of the *quattrocento* were sharply

<sup>1</sup>Although the author goes too far in his statement that Rome was the only great native power in all Italy, since Venice and Florence were still independent, it is quite true that it was the chief native state. The empire in the north referred to is probably Spain, upon whose dominions the sun never set, and which by acquisition of the duchy of Milan and the union with the German Empire under Charles V. became also a northern power.—ED.

defined individualities, like the tyrants of the different cities, who were kings within their little principalities. Each individual can be recognised at the first glance, and even the cabinet-maker gave his work a personal note. Their works are dear to us, not as products of manual labour, but as human documents. The painters of the *cinquecento*, on the other hand, conceal their personality in their creations. All individual characteristics are effaced. As in the political world there were only two great personalities, the pope and the emperor, so in the artistic there were only a few kings, whose courtiers the others were satisfied to be. The word "school," which had no meaning during the fifteenth century, now acquired its academic significance. All are vassals, whether one is more inclined to Raphael, or another to Michelangelo. To this relation the composition of the paintings corresponds: one central figure dominating all the others.

Perino del Vaga, whose estimable decorative talent was of much use to Raphael, painted at a later period the mythological frescoes of the Palazzo Doria in Genoa, variants of what he had painted under Raphael in the Farnesina and the Loggie. In his *Deposition from the Cross*, painted for the church of Santa Trinità dei Monti, Daniele da Volterra also appears as a faithful follower of Raphael, but his *David Beheading Goliath* (Louvre) was long attributed to Michelangelo. In the latter painting a preference for the colossal, for exag-

gerated dramatic action and swollen muscles, has taken the place of his former noble simplicity.

The exaggerated form of Michelangelo combined with sprawling movements and obscene sensuality—such is the art of Giulio Romano. He was Raphael's favourite pupil and later became his most useful assistant. Most of that which goes under Raphael's name in the Stanza dell' Incendio, in the Farnesina, and in the Hall of Constantine, as well as many pictures from Raphael's later period (such as the *Pearl* at Madrid, and in the Louvre *St. Margaret* and the portrait of *Joan of Aragon*) is at least in execution the work of Giulio. After Raphael's death it was he who completed the *Transfiguration* and the *Coronation of the Virgin*. None of Raphael's pupils so completely adopted his style, although even then Giulio transformed it into a crude and coarser art. In his later works no traces of this tutelage can be observed. Impetuous haste replaces gentleness, and even his Madonnas are full of Michelangesque elements: Mary herself being a mighty woman of gigantic form, the Christ-child a powerful lad with lively complicated movements. Even less do the frescoes in the Palazzo del Tè at Mantua remind one of his former relation with Raphael. Great muscular power, great technical *bravura*, and coarseness are the characteristics of the pictures in which he depicts the love stories of Psyche and other Olympians. The Hall of the Giants especially contains the boldest and wildest that Giulio's strong hand created. Upon

GIULIO ROMANO



FALL OF THE GIANTS  
*Fresco in Palazzo del Tè, Mantua*



the ceiling one gazes upon an apparent panorama drawn in perspective: an Ionic columnar hall vaulted with a mighty cupola enclosing the throne of Jupiter. All Olympus is in commotion; for the giants painted on the wall are storming heaven. The lightning strikes, overwhelming the malefactors with the columns and walls of temples. There is no decorative arrangement of the surfaces, with the result that the flood of figures is poured without restraint over walls and ceiling. Even the boundary between the floor and walls is not preserved; for Giulio had the floor paved with stones upon which he continued the painting of the wall in order to heighten the dramatic illusion.

It was not long before the Florentine school pursued the same paths. In characterising these masters it is not necessary to speak of them, but only of the models whom they followed. Francesco d'Ubertino, called Bacchiacca, decorated furniture in the style of the *quattrocento*, but attuned his colour to that soft misty grey which Andrea del Sarto had brought into fashion. Franciabigio, the fresco painter with whom the latter laboured in the Annunziata and the Scalzo, is also known by his furniture decorations and especially by portraits which form subtle variations of Leonardo's *Mona Lisa*. Puntormo, likewise a good portrait painter, was, in his earlier works, like the *Annunciation* of 1516, a clever imitator of the transparent silver grey tones of Andrea; but in his later works (as in the *Forty Martyrs* of the Pitti Gallery) he degenerated

into bombastic imitation of Michelangelo. Ridolfo Ghirlandajo, who at first resembled Raphael, repeated at a later period, with artisan clumsiness, what he had in his youth spoken with freshness and spirit. In examining the youthful works of Francesco Granacci one is reminded of Domenico Ghirlandajo, in his later works of Raphael or Michelangelo. Giuliano Bugiardini, Giovanni Sogliani, Domenico Puligo, and their numerous associates are all sympathetic painters, but their works only reflect those created by the authoritative masters.

The further the century progresses the rarer artistic individuality becomes. Portrait painting, indeed, for a time remains fresh. Bronzino especially has left a series of portraits which not only determined the character of court painting for all Europe, but in their sincerity are worthy of the best traditions of the primitives: in line as sharp as chiselled medals, and distinguished in conception and colour. But even this master seems only a survivor of the long procession of mighty portrait painters produced by the preceding epoch. What he still could do—the rendition of a human physiognomy with characteristic truth—the later painters neither desired nor were able to accomplish. If the fifteenth century, with its civil wars which permitted every peasant lad to become a duke, with its bold recklessness and unrestrained feeling of personal worth, also created the most individual portraits: so the sixteenth, which destroyed

the free republics and the spirit of individualism, gave also to its portraits a uniform character. Types replace personalities, or else portrait painting is altogether avoided, because the dependence upon the model cannot be reconciled with the retention of ideal beauty.

A dreary monotony extends on all sides. There was a very great opportunity for painting. Even the commissions of Julius II. or Leo X. seem unimportant in comparison with the gigantic works that originated in the second half of the sixteenth century. All mythological and historical subjects were reproduced in colours; but no matter how many figures occur in the paintings, they are always the same *clichés* printed over another signature. The antique is of course the centre of interest, and it is strange how willingly it at all times came to the aid of modern artists. At the beginning of the century when the ideals of taste were delicacy and nobility, the *Apollo Belvedere* was exhumed; and with the middle of the century, when the tendency was towards Baroque wildness, the *Farnese Hercules* and the *Farnese Bull* were resurrected from the earth. These Roman copies of Lysippan originals, although their chief characteristics are clumsiness and vulgarity, drew a whole generation in their trail. The head in these works is an eternal variant of the absolute ideal of beauty prescribed by the Grecian decadence; the body is no organism but a composition of bombastic, swollen



limbs placed in effective contrast. Because the most influential antique work happened to be a Hercules, moderns also thought they must render colossal figures and no longer create men but giants.

This bombastic rendition of form is supplemented by a declamatory expression of thought. No one any longer expresses briefly what he has to say, but all shout with rhetorical pathos. Christ can no longer sit at the Last Supper without making cramped theatrical gestures; servants with edibles rush up steps; the disciples wave their arms and contort their bodies. Others feel that such efforts of *bravura* are in the long run tiresome, but the more they reason and follow the rules, the more monotonous their works become: geometrical constructions of general, formal beauty which differ from each other as little as the proofs of a mathematical theorem. It is significant that the history of Italian art was now first transcribed; for the historical activity of Vasari ends the entire development. The age itself had the feeling that its creative artery was dried, and sought inspiration in the past, repeating what had already been done.

### III. Roma Caput Mundi

So great was the trend towards centralisation that other countries also submitted to the artistic supremacy of the Eternal City. During the second half of the

sixteenth century Italy marched at the head of civilisation. Italian generals won battles for the emperor, the king of France, and the king of Spain; Italian physicians were summoned as far as Scotland and Turkey; Italian scholars gave instruction in all the universities of France, Germany, and England. The Italian language, little known in the fifteenth century, became the general language of the distinguished world. Aretino, the Venetian pamphleteer, levied tribute upon all the crowned heads of Europe. Artistically, also, Italy gave the tone to all nations. As Italian masters found occupation in the most different courts, so the northern painters thought they could find enlightenment only in the South. A homesick longing for Italy, as in Goethe's and Carstens's day, seized the best spirits, and gave them no rest until they had reached the land of their dreams. With privations and sufferings, labouring for their bread by the way, they made pilgrimages to Rome as to a sanctuary, and were never willing to depart after having been there. Dürer's words: "Oh, how shall I freeze for lack of the sun; here am I a lord, at home a sycophant," expressed their innermost soul. For they not only admired the art of Italy; they envied the artists themselves: Raphael, whose whole life was a triumphal procession; Michelangelo, who treated popes as his equals; Titian, whose brush an emperor, Charles V., picked up. They longed for relief from the limitations of their little towns and from the philistine narrowness of the

North; they wished to take part in a great, free, dignified existence.

In the Netherlands, where a sort of Renaissance pervaded the entire spiritual life, the pilgrimage to Rome began earliest. One artist especially, Jan Scorel, a chivalric romanticist, is a true type of this cosmopolitan race. He inherited from infancy much sense of gracefulness and a fine feeling for landscape. Old, gnarled trees, oaks and pines, occur in all his works. Even before he had trod the soil of the South, he dreamt of majestic mountain ranges, of cypresses and pines. Then he seized the wanderer's staff. For some time he remained in Germany, and even longer in Carinthia, where he painted the altar-piece at Obervillach and fell in love with the young daughter of the lord of the castle. With a company of Netherlandish pilgrims he went from Venice to Palestine—a journey which became a voyage of discovery for landscape painting. For while even Patinir, in order to give his landscapes a biblical character, composed them of fantastic sceneries, Scorel was the first to paint the real Holy Land. His *Baptism of Christ* in Haarlem must have seemed a revelation to men for whom the Orient was still a locked and distant world of fables. Returning to Italy he was called to play a curious rôle in artistic life. After his countryman, Adrian of Utrecht, the tutor of Charles V., had ascended the papal throne, he named Scorel director of the Belvedere. For three years he lived in the Vatican, in those places

over which the spirit of Raphael still invisibly hovered. What he created in later life, as canon of Utrecht, seems like a mournful echo of these Roman impressions.

Exquisitely tasteful are the landscape backgrounds of his Madonnas. He was charmed by the Roman villas with their melancholy mixture of old age and youth, of splendour and decline. There are aqueducts, overgrown with parasites, the branches of which hang tiredly down from the weather-beaten wall; ruins, and quiet waters, in which brown ferns and withered ivy-clad foliage are reflected. But also as a painter of women he is one of the most subtle of the North. Few beautiful women had previously been created in northern painting. As if only old age, decline, wrinkles, and furrows had attracted them, the ancient Netherlanders had only painted careworn women. The few Nuremberg women in Dürer's drawings are raw-boned and angular, and the bedecked maidens by Cranach are so unattractive that one would think that at that time no beautiful women existed in the North. What pleased the artists was to draw hard faces with sharp and keen technique; they took no pleasure in the soft, misty, and maidenly qualities of womanhood. Scorel, the gentlemanly cleric, who could not live without Agatha von Schönhoven, had a fine sense of feminine charm. Whether he paints Mary or the Magdalen, his women are slender and elegant apparitions of classic outline. With tender sentimentality he draws the harmonious lines of a youthful neck, the

fragrant hair curling over the brow; and with true connoisseurship arranges the soft veil, the puffed sleeves, and the collar. He brought to the Netherlanders who had previously known only nun-like women a new ideal of enchanting worldly grace.

What connection existed between him and the lovable unknown artist called the "Master of the Female Half Figures"? He much resembles Scorel, except that he is often more quiet and hesitating: the Luini of the North, a mild dreamer who speaks only tender loving words. Life with him passes like a beautiful day, to the accompaniment of soft music. He paints young girls playing on the spinnet, raising a glass, or dreaming over their music. Something innocent and harmless, yet melancholy, pervades his graceful, delicate works. One would almost like to say that he saw women with the eye of a schoolboy in love for the first time. For pure as angels and of flower-like grace are these gentle quiet children with their soft movements, their lily-white hands and pure brows, over which the quaintly parted brown hair falls so simply. Pictures like these cannot be described but only felt, and admired in silence. This is probably the chief effect the artist himself intended, since he was perhaps no professional painter, but passed his life so quietly and so unnoticed that our entire knowledge of him lies locked in his pictures.

Jan Gossart, called Mabuse, who made a pilgrimage to Italy even earlier than Scorel, rendered important

services as a painter of the nude. In his youthful works, like the portable altar of Palermo, he was still a miniature painter in the sense of Gerard David. Then one can see in his *Christ on the Mount of Olives* how decadent Gothic was transformed into Baroque confusion. The Italian ideal of women began to affect him and he painted the beautiful *Woman Weighing Gold* in the Berlin Gallery, which is a faint echo of the Master of the Female Half-Figures. In his more ambitious altar-pieces also, as in *Christ at the House of Simon* in the museum of Brussels, Renaissance elements are commingled with the Gothic. In their severe idealism and rigid angularity many of the figures remind one of earlier days; but beside them are others, which, if judged from their soft smoothness of form, would seem to have been taken from Raphael's painting. Even the architectural backgrounds, in their union of Gothic and Renaissance elements, are characteristic of this transition. In his following works (several Madonnas, the *Danae* at Munich, and the picture in Prague Cathedral) he stands entirely upon the soil of the *cinquecento*, although a certain trivial tendency still distinguishes him from the Italians. In the life-size nude figures which he painted at the end of his life, even the remainder of the Gothic intricacies is eliminated. Majestic as ancient marble groups, the figures of Neptune and Amphitrite arise from the cell of an antique temple. True, they are cold, academic, and superficial, but this lies in the character

of the later *cinquecento*. If Mabuse had continued to labour in the style of his youth he would have been a belated survivor of the Gothic; but by attacking the problems which the *cinquecento* laid down he fulfilled an historical mission. For without Mabuse's *Aphrodite*, Rubens's *Andromeda* could hardly have been painted.

In the works of Barend van Orley also there are a rhythm and a flowing, elegant movement which assure him an important position among the masters of the Renaissance in the Netherlands. It is not proper to speak of a repudiation of the national style in the case of these painters; for a style belongs not to a people but to an age. In their transformation from Gothic to Renaissance artists they merely followed the taste of the epoch, and are no worse than contemporary Italians. Of course they are deficient in personal characterisation; for as the essence of idealism consists in the elimination of the individual and in the subordination of the personal to the absolute, so with them the individuality necessarily receded, and there remains only a general uniform type. The development in the Netherlands is a repetition of what Italy had experienced.

As late as the second half of the sixteenth century some energetic portraits were painted. The portrait-painter cannot confine himself to painting man as such, since resemblance can only be achieved by the representation of personal traits. Joost van Cleve, Antonis Mor, Frans Pourbus, and Nicolas Neufchâtel resemble

Bronzino in style. They are healthy, powerful realists who, like their predecessor Massys, know neither generalisation nor retouching; and only in the freer character and quiet dignity of their portraits is their Italian schooling revealed.

The products of the so-called "grand painting" are lacking in every personal imprint. Michael Coxie was called the Flemish Raphael, Frans Floris, the Flemish Michelangelo; and these titles sufficiently indicate that they said nothing which had not been better said by Raphael and Michelangelo before them. Marten de Vos, Barthel Spranger, Marten Heemskerck, Cornelis Cornelissen—the same statement applies to all of them. They covered enormous surfaces with beautiful but cold figures, and did not serve art, but made use of certain completed designs which enabled them to satisfy all commissions with schematic perfection.

Proceeding from the Netherlands into other countries we find the names of the actors changed, but the drama which they play is always the same. The silence of the grave lies over Germany, in which the troubles following the Reformation had deprived art of a foothold. The few South German princes who were in a position to play the rôle of Mæcenas either summoned foreigners to their courts or bought old masters. At this time originated the private collections which formed the basis of the Munich and Vienna galleries. The few painters who still existed in Germany fol-



lowed the same path as the Netherlanders. Bartel Bruyn, the last survivor of the Cologne school, undertook the rôle of Mabuse. His portraits rank with Holbein's and Amberger's as the best products of German portraiture. In his religious paintings he at first continued the work of the Master of the Death of Mary, but later was transformed into a follower of Raphael. The family group in the Munich gallery by Christoph Schwartz, a Munich painter who studied at Venice, possesses the strong and simple sincerity of old German art, while at the same time it shows a harmony of colour and broad technique derived from Titian. His altar-pieces also re-echo the full sonorous chords of the Venetian masters. Johann Rottenhammer is more trivial and dainty and possesses a pleasing, superficial charm. The demand for decorative work was supplied by Joseph Heintz and Hans von Aachen, *virtuosi* of the brush, whose work might equally well be Netherlandish or Italian.

French painting had a very original beginning in Jean Fouquet. Although he had visited Italy, his chief work in the Berlin Gallery, representing Étienne Chevalier, the favourite of Charles VII., and Agnes Sorel, commended by Stephen, his patron saint, to the protection of the Madonna, reminds one of Goes, rather than the Italian masters. The corresponding painting at Antwerp has a specifically French note. In it the Blessed Virgin is represented with the features of Agnes Sorel, clad in a short fashionable dress and princely

ermine and suckling the Child. A piquant Parisian perfume is wafted from the work.

In the sixteenth century the two Clouets, Jean and François, still laboured in this ancient style. Jean Clouet, who was until 1540 court painter to Francis I., resembles Holbein in the photographic truth with which he renders physiognomy. François Clouet, who succeeded his father as court painter in 1540, had the same severe, sure art, except that he is more cosmopolitan and distinguished, reminding us rather of Bronzino than of Holbein.

In fresco painting the same change that occurred elsewhere had in the meanwhile taken place. The invasions of Italy by the French kings at the close of the fifteenth century had already established an artistic connection. In their wars over the duchy of Milan Charles VIII. and Louis XII. not only took along their own painters like Jan Perréal, but also invited Italian artists to settle in France. It is sufficient to recall the mighty name of Leonardo. With Francis I. the real Italian Renaissance in France began. A whole army of Italian artists was speedily summoned and commissioned to decorate the newly constructed castles. Fontainebleau especially (where in the nineteenth century Millet, Rousseau, Corot, and Diaz painted) became the French Vatican. Il Rosso, Primaticcio, and Niccolo dell' Abbate were in charge of the decorations—painters whose works one indifferently passes by in Italy and who do not improve by

being seen in France. Among their French followers is Jean Cousin, a facile artist of profound knowledge, whose *Last Judgment* contains many a brilliant theatrical effect. It is very instructive to compare the later decorations of the palace of Fontainebleau with the earlier. The masters summoned to complete this new work were not Italians but Netherlanders. But Hieronymus Francken, the head of the Netherlandish colony, was a pupil of Michelangelo's follower Frans Floris; and passing through the halls one observes, therefore, no difference between the Italian and Netherlandish works.

The tendency towards centralisation in the *cinquecento* led to a complete uniformity of art. Everything is elastic, polished, and elegant. But just as in their portraits artists of the most different minds resemble each other (they all wear the same fantastic costume and assume the same declamatory attitude), so their painting lacks individual character. The signatures only tell us that this is the work of a German, that of a Netherlander, that again of a Frenchman. What one sees is always the same, general and idealised forms, typical faces, ideal draperies, carefully weighed composition, and an equally cold ceremoniousness in the expression of sentiment. In spite of all its fruitfulness the second half of the sixteenth century was an age of weariness and exhaustion. The ideals of the Renaissance had lost their spiritual significance and new ones had not yet arisen. Although the great

masters were dead, men still laboured with their thoughts, and deduced from scientific rules what with them had been an expression of personality. As late as the beginning of the sixteenth century every land and every province had had its own art; now a universal language, a Volapük of art, has replaced the dialects. A new development of painting could only come when some great movement in civilisation gave it new subjects, new problems, and new aims. These new ideals were furnished by the Counter-reformation.

## Chapter VIII

### Struggle of Venice and Spain against Rome

#### 1. Lorenzo Lotto

THE course of the development of art in the sixteenth century was exactly the same as in the fifteenth. The great heathen Renaissance was followed by an ecclesiastical reaction; and as at that time the hurricane which descended with Savonarola had been heralded long before by thunder and lightning, so the beginning of the Counter-reformation goes back to the decade following 1520.

A strange tone is suddenly sounded in the activity of the masters of the Renaissance: weird, visionary, convulsed elements mingle with antique joyfulness and Hellenic pleasure in form. Michelangelo's figures seem pursued by a nightmare, as if the thought of the Nazarene would not let them rest. The eyes of St. John in Fra Bartolommeo's *Entombment*, the eyes of John the Baptist in the *Madonna di Foligno*, those of St. Cecilia and of the *Sistine Madonna*—all betray that even these masters were touched by the religious current whose wave dashed from Germany over Italy.

But with them the influence was an external one; the few drops of Christianity did not mingle with their Hellenic blood.

Conditions were different in Venice, which since its origin had been a religious city, a Byzantine outpost on Italian soil. During the entire *quattrocento* it remained a bulwark against the Renaissance; and even after a worldly and religious art had been introduced from elsewhere by Gentile da Fabriano and Pisanello, the native school of Murano held fast to mediæval traditions. We remember how at the close of the century, when the religious reaction passed through Italy, Crivelli seized the opportunity once more to resurrect Byzantinism. A time indeed followed when Venice, like an isle of Cythera, was pervaded by worldly sensuality and joyful festal feeling. No one thought any longer of heaven, into which the earth itself had been transformed. The gondoliers sang, beautiful women laughed, and every one seemed rich, proud, and happy. It was a soft and sensuous atmosphere, such as Giorgione painted; a proud and majestic splendour—that of Titian. But although those works form the acme of Venetian art, no Venetian was among the leaders of the movement. Aldus Manutius, who made Venice the literary centre of Humanism, was a Florentine, and all the painters came from the mainland: Giorgione from Castelfranco, Palma from Serinalta, and Titian from Pieve. Yet even in their antique works these masters preserve a holy solemnity. There is no longing

as with Correggio, no sensuality as with Sodoma. Titian, though a heathen, painted the *Magdalen* with the skull, which almost heralds the art of the Jesuits; and with a picture which was no antique subject but the *Crown of Thorns* his activity passed away. At Rome Sebastiano avoided antique subjects, painting miracles and martyrdoms. However much the traveller would fain think of the sound of mandolins and of sunshine when Venice is mentioned, his first impression is the black gondola gliding gloomily as a hearse over the dark green lagoons. The character of the palaces is solemn and gloomy; the bells of Murano sound subdued and solemn. For Venice paganism remained an episode. The Renaissance masters from foreign cities were confronted even at the beginning of the sixteenth century by a native Venetian, a follower of Savonarola and the herald of Caraffa. Like a ghost or a preacher of penance Lorenzo Lotto wanders in the midst of that joyful, worldly race; and amid the jubilant bacchanalian hymns of his contemporaries his pictures sound solemn as the bells of Murano.

Lotto also, when a young man, was influenced by the ideas of the Renaissance. The cycle of his works begins with that *Danae* of the collection of Professor Conway in London whom one would not be surprised to meet among the works of Böcklin. In a green meadow yellow, blue, and white flowers grow; round about trees, fine and erect as in Böcklin's *Summer Day*, stretch into the blue ether. In the

midst of the meadow sits a maiden in white garments receiving in her lap the shimmering golden rain, and a small goat-footed satyr listens behind a tree. But his next picture belongs to a different world of ideas. Upon the slope of a steep precipitous cliff a half-naked hermit kneels before the cross of the Redeemer. Swarms of ravens flutter over his head while he penitently strikes himself with the scourge in his hand. *St. Jerome* is Lotto's second hero; the old man who turns away from mankind to find rest in solitude, the tired greybeard burdened by the oppressive weight of the past.

Lotto, the son of conservative Venice, arose as the standard-bearer of the great religious past; for thus the strange archaism of his early works may best be explained. When his activity began, Giorgione, Titian and Palma were regarded as foreign intruders. Even Giovanni Bellini was considered a renegade to the religious art which his predecessors, the Muranese, had still comprehended in its majestic Byzantine solemnity. Lotto bears the same relation to Titian and Giorgione in the sixteenth century as Crivelli to Bellini in the fifteenth. His ideal is Alwise Vivarini, the last survivor of the old school of Murano, who in the days of Giovanni Bellini had proclaimed the gospel of self-renunciation so dear to Byzantine art.

The pictures at Naples, in the Borghese Gallery, Rome, and at Asolo are the principal examples of Lotto's Muranese style. Cima had removed the throne



of Mary from the solemn apse of the church to the open landscape. Even Bellini, his teacher, breaking with the old form of altars with wings, predelle, and lunettes, had treated altarpieces as simple, decorative panels in the manner of the *cinquecento*. Giorgione took a further step by substituting for the humility of the handmaid of the Lord, the love charm of the worldly woman. There is nothing of all this with Lotto. In the apse of a church with solemn and gloomy architecture stands the throne of Mary, or in his smaller pictures the figures arise as if out of nothingness, from a dark background. He always maintained the mediæval form of the altar with wings and predelle. Solemn and unapproachably majestic is the expression of Mary, gloomy and troubled is the following of saints gathered about her throne. The wild men of the desert of Castagno and the old Donatello, the ascetic hermits and fantastic preachers of Botticelli are revived in Lotto's works. Especially does the figure of the aged Onophrius in the picture of the Borghese Gallery, so like King Lear, sound like the echo of a convulsed time, when the aged Donatello designed his confused reliefs at Padua, and when Zoppo and Schiavone, Tura and Bartolommeo Vivarini painted their harsh, ascetic pictures.

Meanwhile Alwise Vivarini had died, no one worked at Venice in the spirit of the past, and Lotto was not strong enough to stand alone. Thus, at least, the abrupt change which he made may be best explained.

After Muranese art had sunk into the grave he sought for other models, sublime beyond all doubt. No art could be more religious or rest upon a sounder foundation than the one to which the Vicar of Christ gave his blessing. So he set out upon a pilgrimage to Rome, not to the Eternal City, the city of antiquity, but to the centre of Christendom. The Roman ideals which the pope approved he would make his own. But after he had laboured for four years, from 1508 to 1512, under the influence of Raphael, the result was the same as twenty years before with Savonarola. As what he had seen in Rome aroused the reforming spirit of the Dominican friar, and as the libertinism which ruled in the most holy places confirmed him in the belief that a new prophet must come to save the church from destruction: so Lotto also, in his association with the Roman artists, felt there that was nothing Christian in Christian art as it was then practised; that it was further away from what the church had once honoured than were the works of Bellini, Titian, and Giorgione which he had viewed with fearful eyes at home.

The picture of *St. Vincent Ferrer* which he painted for the altar of Recanati seems like a thunderbolt of the Counter-reformation striking into the Venetian Renaissance. Not only the theme announces the spirit of Ignatius Loyola (for Vincent Ferrer is a saint whom the Spaniards honoured as an apocalyptic prophet); but the gloomy monastic trend, the wild convulsion of the painting has more in common with Zurbaran than

with the *cinquecento*. In the altar of San Bartolommeo at Bergamo his feeling was again quieted; for no sentiment of battle but a mild resignation pervades the work. Lotto had, it would seem, found a support in a religious movement which was accomplished at that time. During the pontificate of Leo X. a sort of society, the *Illuminati*, had been formed, to which distinguished gentlemen and cultured ladies from all parts of Italy belonged: "beautiful souls," who were as little satisfied with the heathen philosophy as with the forms of official religion, and professed a sort of pantheistic Christianity. Was Lotto a member of this "Society of the Divine Love?" One might almost believe so in view of his paintings during the following years (1515-24), when quiet Bergamo was his place of residence. The characteristic feature of these paintings is a pantheistic Christianity. He feels himself in community of love with everything that exists. Nature, which in the sense of the Muranese he had formerly regarded as something godless, the accursed Golgotha upon which the cross of the Redeemer stood, has now become for him a book written by the finger of God; the great mother of all things to whom man and animal, tree and flower owe their existence. A new religion had revealed itself to him which reminds one of Spinoza or of the first enthusiastic days of the Franciscan order when the saint of Assisi, in reaction against a rigid scholasticism, proclaimed the gospel of love, transferred the love of God to the whole world, and

addressed Christ and Mary, men and animals, the plants and the stars of heaven as his brothers and sisters.

This change of opinion is clearly shown in the type of his Madonnas. Gloomy and unapproachable with the Muranese; a sibyl, staring sadly with wide eyes into the distance with Bellini; the solemn queen of heaven with Titian: she has become with Lotto the blessed mother, caressing her boy, and pressing her cheek against his in beaming maternal joy. Pictures like his Madonna at Dresden contain nothing new for the history of art, since Leonardo and Correggio had painted similar themes; but they are new for Venetian painting, which had always imparted to the Madonna involuntary and apathetic qualities, and had never attempted to portray tender maternal love. The contrast between wealth and poverty is overcome. In the older Italian paintings Mary is either soulful, in which case she is the poor maiden, or she wears costly garments and is proud and haughty. Although Lotto's Madonnas are richly clothed, although pearls adorn their hair, and their hands are white and tender, they also quiver with feeling. Not only under a beggar's garb but under a silken bodice, a tender heart may beat and the love of God may move.

This love he imparts also to the landscape. Mary is no longer enthroned in church but in God's free nature. Wide and boundless the country stretches before us, traversed by rivers which empty into the distant sea. As in a single picture he attempts to

render the whole infinity of the universe, he also reveals a power of observation for minute objects, for tender forms of the vegetable world, which no contemporary Venetian could rival. Here a rose-bush in full bloom hangs over the wall; there a thick wall of jasmines forms the background or branches of blossoms are spread over the ground. If interiors are represented, he paints, like a Dutch still-life painter, cups, books, pots and candlesticks. A soft light, as if in heavenly harmonies, quivers through the room. Even his frescoes gave a new expression of this pantheistic tendency. In contrast to Italian fresco-painting in general, which has a certain monumental sweep and preserves the solemn character of tapestry, Lotto disregards its decorative character, giving broad views upon sunlit streets and squares, where high houses arise and men move about in daily traffic. And while other masters gave their work an architectural framing of friezes and pilasters, Lotto eliminates all such features, and, like the Japanese in their wood-cuts, depicts grape and cherry branches of the foreground extending into the midst of the fields.

As a portrait painter, he struck chords which are echoed in no other Italian work. All other portraits of the *cinquecento* are solemn representative pictures. The subjects are not at ease, but seem as dignified as if they felt that the eyes of the world were upon them. People who played an important part in the world did not exist in little Bergamo, or such as did were not

LORENZO LOTTO



PORTRAIT OF THE PROTHONOTARY GIULIANO  
*National Gallery, London*



congenial company for tranquil Lotto. Only those whom he loved and honoured were invited into his studio, and this circumstance alone differentiates his portraits from those of Raphael or Titian.

Instead of the general representative types of the *cinquecento* Lotto paints workmen of the spirit, a humanity which stands nearer to us of the present day in thought and feeling. Unconcerned with their decorative appearance, he does not show them as they move in the world, but in their hours of introspection. Nor does he confine himself to reading their countenances and abstracting their secrets like a father confessor, but even seems to offer them advice, to adjure and warn them; as when in his picture of the youth in the Borghese Gallery he adds a skull amid rose or jasmine leaves, or in the picture of the nervous man in the Doria Gallery gives the age of the subject as in sepulchral inscription. Woman is for him a vampire, who sucks the life-blood from men. This thought seems to pervade his groups; as for example the Messalina-like woman of the National Gallery with the hard, cold glance, and at her side the pale man with trembling hands, and a resigned and tired glance.

The wonderful picture of Palazzo-Rospigliosi (Rome), which is wrongly called the *Triumph of Chastity*, marks the conclusion of this period of tranquil artistic activity passed at Bergamo. Although he had attained his fiftieth year, he had as yet expressed few of the sentiments that had convulsed his youthful



soul. He therefore decided to see the world again and find out what was moving the artists there. So he set out, travelled for a while in the Marches, was at the sack of Rome in 1527, and in 1529 returned to Venice.

The immediate result of these travels was that he united what he saw into a strange *potpourri* of painting. He, the brooder and the thinker, for a time imitated Palma, and threw himself at Titian's feet. But with the spread of the Catholic reformation fate was more favourable to him. The mild and conciliatory Contarini, who had before this laboured for reform in Venice, was joined in 1527 by the gloomy Neapolitan Caraffa. In a garden by the monastery of San Giorgio Maggiore the friends of the movement assembled weekly as guests of Abbot Cortese. The nobility, the learned world, and the clergy were all represented, and the eyes of all who longed for a reformation of the church looked in silent hope towards Venice. A reform of art was also intended; for Caraffa recommended the rigid and ritual forms of Byzantinism to the painters as the truest expression of reverential, churchly piety. There was thus suddenly awakened in Lotto a sense of power similar to that which Botticelli felt when Savonarola confirmed his youthful ideals; he also would preach and struggle. He has at last found a fixed aim and a true reason for artistic activity. Enthusiasm and pathos radiate from his works: the mighty figures of bishops, Crucifixions, and Madonnas.

But for the present paganism was still stronger than

Christianity. Contarini was deserted by his followers and Titian, who had in some works professed Christianity, returned to his old Hellenic ways. For Lotto this meant the collapse of all of his hopes. He clung helplessly to the most primeval masters, painting works like the *Crucifixion* at Milan, which seems a gloomy echo of the *trecento*; the *Pietà* of the same gallery, which in its grimacing pain approaches Crivelli; and the altar-piece of Ancona, a strange union of Baroque wildness with Muranese archaism. The altar-piece of the church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo at Venice—human hands stretched upwards, as in Lempoe's *Fate*, with quivering longing for salvation—he presented to the monks in return for a free burial. The aged St. Jerome, who sought in solitude refuge from earthly strife, again filled his mind. He also would have nothing more in common with the profane, and would settle in some quiet corner of the world to end his days as a hermit. He sold the contents of his studio, which included a picture of the *Rational Soul*, another of the *Christ-child Bearing a Cross*, and a third of the *Conflict between Force and Happiness*, and withdrew to Loreto, where he bought a place among the monks. In this sacred precinct Lotto died, a martyr to his faith, because his message came too soon. But the tendency heralded in his works was the one to which the future belonged.

## 11. Tintoretto

In the year 1545 Pietro Aretino, the Venetian author, wrote a strange letter to Michelangelo. As a Christian he disapproved of the freedom which the master had taken in his treatment of the *Last Judgment*. It was a scandal that such a work should be daily seen in the greatest temple of Christianity, upon the chief altar of Jesus, and in the holiest chapel of the world, by the vicegerent of Christ himself. Although even the heathens had portrayed Diana or Venus with modesty, Michelangelo did not consider this necessary; and his picture therefore was suitable for a bathroom but not for a church. It was a blasphemy to represent the Heavenly Father as Jupiter and the saints as antique heroes, to transform the Madonna into a love goddess and Christian martyrs into *hetæraæ*.

It is significant that this letter came from Venice. Ancient, rigid Byzantine Venice again girds herself to take a part in the development of Italian art, and to supersede the Renaissance of antiquity by a Renaissance of the middle age.

But the time was not yet ripe. As in the fifteenth century Ghirlandajo had to appear before Savonarola, so in the sixteenth the extreme bound of ecclesiastical worldliness had to be reached before the reaction could begin. The Ghirlandajo of the sixteenth century came in the person of a stranger, Paolo Cagliari, who became the painter of Venetian festivities. In his

brilliant art the worldly spirit of the *cinquecento* celebrated its last great triumph.

An ancient author has described a festival which the Venetian Senate gave in honour of Henry III. of France. Two hundred of the most beautiful gentlewomen of Venice, dressed in white and covered with pearls and diamonds, received him, so that the king thought that he had suddenly entered a realm of goddesses and fairies. Paolo's paintings in the Ducal Palace are of a similar fairy-like pomp. The whole splendour of Venice is there revealed. Representatives of the people salute the doge; beautiful women smile down from marble balustrades; cavaliers ride about upon splendid, prancing horses. Allegories also—*Loyalty, Happiness, Gentleness, Moderation, and Retribution*—are to be seen: at least, so says Baedeker, but from the paintings one would never know it. For Veronese painted only beautiful women; if he gives one a lamb, it is *Gentleness*, if a dog *Loyalty*.

Notwithstanding their titles, his earlier decorations of the Villa Maser are no frosty allegories. Landscapes, beautiful Ionic columns, guide the eye into the distance; mighty nude figures in bold poses fill the niches and recline upon the architraves: Venus surrounded by Loves and Graces, and Bacchus with his joyous vine-crowned fauns. Christianity and paganism, the nude and the draped are strangely commingled. Cupids, beautiful women, genii, goldsmith's work, and gleaming fabrics are heaped together in superb examples of still

life. The Olympian joyfulness of the *cinquecento*, in no wise "sicklied o'er by the pale cast of thought," here speaks its last word.

The above descriptions also show what may not be expected from Veronese. He is certainly a clever decorator and an improviser of enviable facility; a painter of great delicacy of feeling. How festally effective is his red, recurring like a joyful trumpet-blast among the silver grey harmonies of his paintings! Yet one never thinks or dreams before his works, but only sees. Veronese seems to have come into the world to prove that the painter need have neither head nor heart, but only a hand, a brush, and a pot of paint in order to clothe all the walls of the world with oil paintings. His panel paintings are a supplement of his achievements as a mural painter. In contrast to Carpaccio, who discriminates sharply between decorative and panel paintings, Veronese knows no such difference. Out of a still life of satin portières and rustling brocaded robes, the head of a woman appears: such are his female portraits; powerful female figures clad in heavy, gold gleaming damask, their blond hair decked with diamonds, the neck with sparkling chains, are labelled *Venus* or *Europa*. If he paints Mary, she is not the handmaid of the Lord or even the queen of heaven, but a woman of the world, listening with approving smile to the homage of a cavalier. In light, red silk morning dress, she receives the Angel of the Annunciation and hears without surprise—for she has already

PAOLO VERONESE



THE MARRIAGE OF CANA  
*Dresden Gallery*



heard it—what he has to say; and at the *Entombment* she only weeps in order to keep up appearances.

Those luxuriant festal suppers to which he gave the title of *Christ in the House of Levi*, the *Marriage at Cana*, or the *Last Supper* are especially celebrated. In a splendid hall of columns the festal board is laid amid staircases and colonnades of marble; waiters move busily about with silver platters and crystal wine-bottles; upon a festively adorned balustrade musicians make table music; while the ladies and gentlemen of Venice, celebrated painters and princes in gala costume, assemble for the state banquet. Veronese was a happy man. Everywhere he goes there is joy and splendour; everywhere beautiful women smile, everywhere there is a *maitre d' hotel* who has prepared the best of things. He knows no want, but only riches; no huts, only palaces; no sacrifice, only enjoyment. He does not even know of an after-world or of the final judgment which follows, but stands with both feet upon the earth; nor can he imagine that the Last Supper means anything else than a repast.

Just so Ghirlandajo had painted a hundred years before; and the same reaction followed. On the 18th of July, 1573, Veronese was summoned before the tribunal of the Inquisition to answer for his *Last Supper*, which to-day hangs in the Louvre. Lotto had died a martyr to his belief, but now a shrill signal was sounded; Venice remembered her ancient traditions. All that the foreigners from Giorgione to Veronese had created



was not real Venetian painting. Tintoretto, like Crivelli and Lotto, a born Venetian, rose up against the joyful Veronese as the black knight of the middle age, the sombre priest of a gloomy art.

By his whole character Jacopo Robusti was called to this rôle of giving the first expression to the gloomy pathos of the Counter-reformation. He is described as a stormy and exalted spirit, a fiery passionate nature. When he invited Aretino to come to his atelier, and by way of reminder of a criticism which he had formerly written thrust a pistol under his nose, he reveals himself by this one trait as the predecessor of that wild race to which Caravaggio and Ribera belonged. The well-known scene of the artist painting his dead daughter by lamplight also heralds the time of Beatrice Cenci. Examining his bust in the court of the Ducal Palace, the head with furrowed brow, the hollow cheeks and the deep-set staring eyes, one can also understand how the consuming passion and the charnel-house sentiment of his paintings were based upon the character of the man.

Like all other Venetians of the day, Tintoretto had studied with Titian, and appears in his first works as a master of the Renaissance, tranquil in sentiment, gleaming and golden in colour. He painted the radiant nudity of the youthful female form, studied the play and reflection of light as it softly caresses a tender back, and by means of fairy-like landscape imparted to his pictures a solemn and majestic splendour. To

his works of this period belong *Susanna* in the Vienna Gallery, the slender *Andromeda* in St. Petersburg, his *Venus* at Florence; and the most beautiful work by him in Germany, *Martha's Supper*, in the Augsburg Gallery. His representation of *Christ Washing the Feet of his Apostles* signifies, in its joyful Renaissance spirit, the acme of his work as a worldly painter. The sunlight floods the hall, and through the rows of mighty columns the eye falls upon shimmering palaces and the glittering mirror of the lagoons.

As in these paintings there are points of contact with Veronese, so in his portraits he resembles Titian. Tintoretto is more one-sided than he. While in Titian's portraits the most beautiful women of Venice pass by, among Tintoretto's few women occur, and such as do are harsh and mannish, massive and heavy. The portraits of the doges and procurators which he painted in an official capacity are the only ones which reveal him in his full greatness. Here also a harsh objectivity differentiates him from Titian. While the latter seeks beautiful poses and graceful movement, and by the use of columns and a curtain imparts to the background also a festal and decorative effect, Tintoretto's backgrounds are sombre, enlivened with a coat of arms at most; and he is unable to render a beautiful pose because he never paints entire figures but mostly a three-quarter piece. Even the hands, upon which Titian bestowed so much attention, he subordinates, as does Lenbach, to the head, either concealing them in

Danish gloves or completing them with a few brush strokes. By means of this simplification—and also because he never paints transient traits, but the official mien—he achieves even more powerful and monumental effects than Titian. Velasquez learned much from Tintoretto's portraits of senators.

In his portrait groups he appears as a predecessor of Frans Hals. He was the first to paint pictures intended for public buildings which, like the Dutch *doelenstukke*, united a number of officials in a single group. But while the Dutch, in order to unite the figures, represented them at a banquet, Tintoretto's *nobili* were far too proud to show themselves to the people in an exhilarated condition. Without any bond of union, without loss of composure, gloomy and reserved, they stand there, like Spanish grandees upon Italian soil.

But the real Tintoretto, the diligent master workman of the wild and fanatical style which dominated the following decades, can only be studied in his religious pictures. It seems as if suddenly a dark cloud had overcast the bright heaven of Venetian art. Instead of the enchanting festal music of Veronese, funeral marches and trumpet blasts sound; instead of smiling women, bloody martyrs and pale ascetics appear.

In order to become a painter of the Counter-reformation Tintoretto had formed a quite new technique. In contrast to the other Venetians who portrayed the nude in repose, he learned to represent it in most

dramatic action. By the study of Michelangelo and the use of the dissecting knife, he learned the extreme play of muscles that could be applied to his stormy figures. The rounded, classic forms of Titian were not suitable for these nude bodies which, inflamed with the ardour of faith, twist and contort themselves as if in illness. No superfluous flesh could make men phlegmatic or restrain the eccentric pathos of their gestures. He therefore introduces a new, emaciated and distended type into Venetian painting. His women, especially, with their pale, livid features and encircled eyes, strangely sparkling as if from black depths, have nothing in common with the soft ideal, of form which he followed in his youth. The colour is used to strengthen the convulsive sentiment. The inscription above the door of Tintoretto's studio: "The line of Michelangelo, the colour of Titian," is an error. For Titian's colour resembles that of a beautiful autumn day, when everything gleams in rich harmonious colours, and the sun, before sinking in the west, once more spreads her warm, even light over the earth; but in the presence of Tintoretto's pictures one does not think of an autumn day, but rather of a dismal night, when the lightning flashes or the flames of smouldering *autos da fé* ascend to heaven. Important portions of the painting lie in deep shadow, while others are illuminated in a ghostly fashion by harsh greenish lights. In place of the rich harmonies of the Renaissance he has substituted the gloomy colour of

the Baroque; the serene brightness of the Hellenic spirit is followed by mediæval night.

The celebrated painting of the Venetian Academy, representing St. Mark freeing a slave from death by sacrifice, is the first shrill trumpet note. The representation of the supernatural interfering in the course of earthly events was a suitable theme for Tintoretto. Head foremost the saint plunges down, seizing with mighty movement the arm of the executioner; a majestic light proceeds from him, illuminating some details, leaving others in deep shade. The symbolic significance is not far to seek. The popes in their free-thinking heathenism are the executioners of the church; but the Republic of St. Mark interferes to save her.

Then came the frescoes in the church of the Madonna del Orto, the *Worship of the Golden Calf* and the *Last Judgment*. Here also is revealed the spirit of the Counter-reformation, which in an age of idolatry pointed to the terrors of the last day. In wild action, as if the delay had already been too long, the angels rush upon Moses to give him the tables of the law. All architectonic laws are dispensed with: here are clouds and yawning space, there wildly commingled masses of figures. At the day of the final judgment all nature is in uproar, the sea overflows its shores, a death-bringing flood. Only a few of the risen, ascending to heaven, find mercy; the angels dash the rest down into the depths. For the whole world had offered sacri-

TINTORETTO



THE MIRACLE OF ST. MARK  
*Accademia, Venice*



VELASQUEZ



PORTRAIT OF HIMSELF  
*Capitoline Gallery, Rome*





fice to the idols of heathendom and lost the right to redemption.

The fifty-six paintings of the Scuola di San Rocco show the whole greatness and boldness of this dæmonic artist. While the Renaissance had avoided the representations of physical suffering and given even to martyrs the smiling expression of a Ganymede, the picture of Tintoretto's *St. Roch Healing a Sick Man* already reveals the awful naturalism which the Spaniards later employed in such representations. The *Annunciation*, which in Veronese's painting is received by Mary as if it were indifferent town news, Tintoretto renders with a passion as if it were his office to proclaim a rebirth of Christ to the world. In his *Crucifixion* he has found methods of heightening the feelings which were not further developed until the panoramic painting of the nineteenth century. In Cagliari's and Robusti's paintings two worlds collide. In the former pleasure in life, the joy and beauty of the Renaissance pass away, while the gloomy and mighty works of Tintoretto pave the way for the art of the seventeenth century.

### III. The Spanish School

As mighty allies, the Spaniards came to the assistance of the Venetians. It is no accident that the portraits of senators by Tintoretto are reminiscent of Velasquez and that the last great Venetian master, Tiepolo, died

in Madrid. For there was a spiritual connection between the city of the black gondolas and the land of the black-robed priests. If the history of art dealt only with spiritual factors, the Spaniards would outrank the Venetians. For the movement of the Counter-reformation originated in Spain. Caraffa had been legate there before he came to Venice in 1527, and it was thence that he brought those rigid Gregorian principles which culminated in the destruction of the heretics and the relentless purification of the church by the return to the discipline of the middle age. Dark, gloomy figures sat upon the throne of the land; kings who were buried not with insignia of real power, but in the cowl of the Dominicans.

The struggle for the faith was traditional with the Spaniards, who battled against the paganism of the Roman church during the sixteenth century as they had in the middle age against the Moors. Ignatius Loyola was the great herald of the battle. By him and his creation, the order of the Jesuits, the mightiest impulse was given to the great movement which has since that time swept over the nations. As the religion of the Roman church had become a veiled paganism, so Spain was the country of convulsed mysticism, which nowhere else revealed itself in such strange forms. Purely contemplative in Italy at the time of Catherine of Siena, mysticism became in Spain a system of self-stupefaction; the art of transporting oneself by external and internal artifices into a con-

dition in which a sensuous union with supernatural divinity was achieved. In this sense Ossuna in 1521 wrote his *Abecedario spiritual*, a manual of the method by which one could attain complete union with God. But religious hysteria found its classic expression in the writings of St. Theresa. According to her doctrine the subject must be absorbed in spiritual contemplation of the Deity until the approach of the moment of ecstasy, the "immediate entrance of the Deity into the soul." She especially emphasises the fact that in such ecstasy there should be complete absence of volition in the body. Only when one is as if dead in this rapture, the Sabbath of the Soul, a foretaste of paradise approaches. The sensations enjoyed, the "joys of heaven in which the body takes such a strange part," are described with detailed exactitude. The same paths were pursued by Michael Molinos and St. Peter of Alcantara, the begging friar, who was composed only of bones and dark brown skin, and took the little sleep which nature persisted in demanding sitting in his narrow cell. At the end of the cycle came those with whom the supersensuous was transformed into sensuality.

That this specifically Spanish element had not yet been purely revealed in the painting of the sixteenth century is due to the fact that art presupposes more difficult manual conditions than literature. Until the fifteenth century paintings had found no home in Spain. The brilliant reception which Jan van Eyck

had received there caused some enterprising Netherlanders to visit the Pyrenean peninsular, and incited by these foreigners, native Spaniards took up painting. Juan Nuñez, Antonio del Rincon, Velasco da Coimbria, and Frey Carlos, who laboured in Spain and Portugal during the fifteenth century, are Gothic masters and advocates of the style which in the Netherlands was represented by Roger and in Germany by Wohlgemuth. As late as the sixteenth century there laboured at Seville Pieter de Kempeneer, a Netherlander, by whom there are a number of Madonnas of gloomy solemnity in German collections. Resembling his art was that of the Spaniard Luis Morales, whose style has points of resemblance with that of Massys. A painful, passionate, gloomy, ascetic character pervades his works. In most of them he displays the Man of Sorrows sinking down under the burden of the cross, flogged at the column, or bleeding under the crown of thorns; in others our Lady of Sorrows, sometimes with the body of her Son in her lap, at others looking upon the cross with wild lamentation. Like Massys he prefers half-length figures. Although the drawing of his emaciated, distended figures is archaic and angular, one feels that this use of the old style is intentional, because it appeared to the master more pious than that of the Renaissance.

Portrait painting is represented by Alonso Coello and Juan Pantoja de la Cruz, representatives of the style usually identified with the name of Bronzino. As

in the case of the latter, their draughtsmanship is careful and delicate, the treatment of costume and ornament very detailed, and the colour of a pale, subtle grey. But while with Bronzino the men wear a sword and the women hold a fan, at the court of Philip II. no one had his portrait painted without a rosary. Thus even the portraits show that one is not in heathen Italy but in the land of religious struggles.

As Spain never offered sacrifice to the gods of Greece, she never had a real Renaissance. It is true that mythological paintings by Titian were placed in the gloomy Escorial, and that Spanish painters journeyed to Italy to complete their technical education. But no one painted a real antique subject. While the pupils of Raphael and Michaelangelo are heathens, contemporary Spaniards, although formerly pupils of the Italians, kept their faith pure and used Renaissance forms only to paint religious scenes: the tragic pathos of the passion scenes, the ascetic solitude of weather-beaten hermits, ecstatic visions, and profound dogmatic treatises. It is significant that they went almost exclusively to Venice, which had remained a bulwark of the church, and had been the first to proclaim the ideas of the Counter-reformation.

Juan Fernandez Navarete and Vincente Carducho, the leaders of the school of Madrid, indeed, use Italian forms; but Navarete, when he painted his *Christ in Limbo*, was inspired not by a Renaissance master, but by the great painter of the Counter-reformation,

Tintoretto. In his *History of the Carthusian Order* Carducho created one of the monastic epics that Zurbarán at a later period composed.

Notwithstanding Justi's investigations, the chief master of Toledo, Domenico Theodocopuli of Crete, deserves a new biographer. For the "pathological degeneration" of El Greco seems an important symptom of the great religious fermentation which at that time had seized all minds. Pictures like his *Purification of the Temple*, in which he appears as a Venetian, express but little; although the theme seems in some wise related with the purification of the church at that time by Caraffa and Loyola. But in the work which introduced him to Spain, *Christ Stripped of His Garments on Calvary*, he has freed himself from Titian, and now seems a savage entering the world of art with impetuous primeval power. He displays a collection of herculean figures composed of real flesh and blood, of barbaric bone and marrow. The same quality gives his painting of the *Holy Trinity* a primeval, brutal grandeur. His picture in the church of San Tome in Toledo, in which the members of a knightly order solemnly attend the funeral of Count Orgaz, whose corpse is lowered into the grave by two saints, while Christ, Mary, martyrs, and angels hover in the air—this painting, in its abrupt union of actual with transcendental, already heralds the visionary painting of the seventeenth century. His later works are uncanny, ghostly pictures of exaggerated line and harsh colour; which

seem to be executed in wax colours mingled with the mould of corpses. In all respects he seems a strange, titanic master; and not until more is known of his life will he stand revealed as an artist. His chief pupil is reputed to have been Luis Tristan, who painted night scenes with mysterious-looking hermits and ascetics doing penance. A harsh green light from above pulsates, as in the case of Tintoretto, through certain parts of the painting, while the remainder is lost in the gloom of the background.

Of the masters who laboured at Valencia, Vicente Juanes is traditionally reputed to have received his education in the school of Raphael. Although he has been called the Spanish Raphael, there is little of the Raphaelesque in his pictures of the *Martyrdom of St. Stephen*. The movements are hard and angular, the colours harsh and brusque; the heads, of a pronounced Jewish type, are painted without reference to any ideal of beauty. Francisco de Ribalta, who travelled no farther than northern Italy, was attracted by the affinities of colour which he found there. But although influenced by Correggio's light and shade, with the technique of the smiling Italian he painted gloomy Spanish subjects: cloistered figures in white hoods; Mary and John returning from the grave of the Lord; Luke and Mary seated in a lonely nocturnal landscape, wrapped in deep thought; and the *Entombment of Christ*, likewise a night scene, with flickering



stars and mighty figures of angels holding the pale body of the Redeemer.

In Seville, where Pedro Campaña,<sup>1</sup> the Netherlander, had laboured, Luis de Vargas was the first to enter the paths of the *cinquecento*. But he also is no Renaissance master. It is unlike the *cinquecento* to introduce a heavenly vision into his *Adoration of the Shepherds* and to paint a goat and the straw with the naturalistic joy of a Ribera. In his principal work, the *Genealogy of Christ* in the cathedral of Seville, the figures are said to have been taken from Raphael, Correggio, and Vasari. It is all the more strange how he translates these masters into Spanish, and with the borrowed forms treats a dogmatic theme never painted by an Italian. Juan de las Roélas, a pupil of Tintoretto at Venice and a clergyman by profession, was the first to give the favourite subjects for Spanish devotion a classic form. The Mother of God hovering upon a crescent in the clouds, adored by a Jesuit in ecstatic devotion, is his principal theme. In his work the *Death of St. Isidore* earthly and heavenly are directly juxtaposed. Below is a representation of monks given with the exactitude of Zurbaran, above angels with palms, song-books, and flowers, fluttering through the luminous æther. Francisco Herrera is known outside of Spain by the great picture of the Louvre, *St. Basil Dictating his Doctrine*. His saints,

<sup>1</sup> This is the Spanish form of the name of Pieter de Kempeneer by which he is usually known.—ED.

with their flashing eyes and majestic gestures, are mighty as primeval kings.

The Spaniards of the sixteenth century assume a peculiar position. Technically they are pupils of the Italians. Like Pacheco and Cespedes, they reflect much over the aims of true art, and are concerned, like all others at that time, with beauty of line and noble composition. But the spirit which pervades their work is the spirit of Jesuitism,—the spiritual tendency to which the future belonged. Venice and Spain, the city of the Byzantines and the land of religious struggles—these two powers, contrary to the will of the popes, encompassed the Counter-reformation. They reminded Rome that she was not only the city of antiquity but also the city of St. Peter. The movement which was now accomplished has been called the “Hispanisation of the Catholic Church.”



**Book III**  
**The Seventeenth and Eighteenth**  
**Centuries**



## Chapter II

### Italian Painting in the Seventeenth Century

#### 1. The Spirit of the Counter-Reformation

**T**he *Gods in Exile*, the title of a fanciful sketch by Heine, would also be an appropriate designation for this chapter. In Leo X's day the gods of Olympus had taken possession of the Christian heaven. Men lived and moved in antiquity, to such an extent that the most sacred monuments of Christian religion gave place to new structures conceived in the antique spirit. In place of the ancient basilica of St. Peter a temple arose in antique proportions, a "Pantheon suspended in the air." The Vatican, the residence of the pope, was filled with the masterpieces of antique art. The purpose of a crusade to which he summoned the nations was not to recover the Holy Sepulchre; he hoped to find Greek codices in Jerusalem. In life also the spirit of Hellenism, the joyous sensuousness of the ancients reigned. Not the princes of the apostles, Peter and Paul, but the heathen philosophers Plato and Aristotle, were immortalised by Raphael as the rulers of spiritual life.

Now the reverse of the medal appeared. The

German Reformation became more and more threatening, not only in Germany but also in England, the Netherlands, and France. Whole provinces were conquered by Protestantism; and even the soil of Italy was undermined. This had to be checked. The Roman church had to reform her life in such a manner as to deprive her opponents of cause for blame and to satisfy her own adherents. Not of her own accord but under compulsion by Venice and Spain, the decision was made. Since the man who himself gave the signal for the revulsion had mounted the Roman throne under the title of Paul IV., the ancient oaths of the Popes: "We promise and swear to encompass the reform of the church universal and of the Roman court," was no longer regarded as a mere formula. The spirit of the Renaissance had not the power to rule the nations. The popes again recognised that Christianity was their only hold, the very reason for their existence. Repentant and with a sudden change, they returned to the Catholic ideal which the Renaissance had denied. Epicureanism was followed by fasting and castigation, the friends of paganism by the inquisitors.

The plan in the beginning was to conquer the hostile elements with iron and blood. The order of the Jesuits received the commission to watch over the mind in the sense of ancient Dominican theology. Just at that time the triumphant course of science had begun with the appearance of Copernicus, Galileo,

Cardanus, Telesius, Campanella, and Giordano Bruno. Banishment, funeral pyres, and racks took care that the investigating thought should not lift its head too high. Poetry also submitted to the autocratic church. Torquato Tasso, the son of the Renaissance ended in a convent, holding dialogue with spiritual apparitions. No longer antique writers but Augustine and Thomas Aquinas dominated his thoughts.

Art, especially, seemed at first banished from the new system. As men had formerly regarded the works of antiquity with religious piety, they now considered them pagan idols. In so far as they were not destroyed or removed from public places, care was taken to change them in accordance with the Christian spirit. A statue of Minerva which stood before the Capitol received a cross instead of a spear, in order that it might signify Christian Rome. From the columns of Trajan and Antoninus the urns with the ashes of the two emperors were removed, and replaced by the statues of Peter and Paul, as an expression of the "triumph of Christianity over heathendom."

The works of the masters of the Renaissance were also subjected to a strict control, particularly as regards their nudity. Because its nudity seemed offensive, Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* was bedecked with those rags which still deface it. The artists themselves became so prudish that they were transformed into penitentiary preachers. Ammanati, a Florentine sculptor of the time of Leo X., "after the



mercy of God had opened his eyes," begged the Grand Duke Ferdinand for permission by means of draperies to transform into Christian virtues the nude statues of gods which he had created for the garden of Pitti Palace thirty years before; and in 1582, "in bitterest repentance over the errors of his own youth," in an open letter to the Florentine artists he warned them "to desist from all portrayal of the nude, lest they offend God and give men a bad example."

Meanwhile the council of Trent had fixed orthodox doctrine as regards ecclesiastical pictures, and had assigned to the bishops the duty of seeing that it was strictly carried out. In 1564 Andrea Gilli da Fabriano wrote his *Dialogo degli errori dei pittori*, wherein he subjected the moral value of the frescoes of the Vatican to severe criticism. In his treatise *De picturis et imaginibus sacris* Molanus in 1570 further developed these unfavourable criticisms; this was followed in 1585 by the *Trattato della nobilità della pittura* by Romano Alberti, and in 1751 by Gregorio Comanini's *Figino*. The *Discorso intorno alle immagini sacre e profane*, published in 1582 by Gabriele Paleotti, archbishop of Bologna, shows with especial clearness the art-hating, fanatical, and puritanic spirit which at first dominated the Counter-reformation.

But only in the beginning: for herein consists its great difference from iconoclastic Protestantism. This is the great thought which the Catholic church never forgot: at all times to treasure art as a mighty ally of

religion. After the church had for a moment thought of throwing art into shackles, she immediately recognised what an invaluable propaganda had been lost. Instead of banishing art she made use of it: instead of subjugating it she began to employ it as an effective means of agitation, and confronted cold and sober Protestantism with the splendid pomp of the ancient church. The splendour of the Eternal City should have a dazzling and overpowering effect upon every one who trod the sacred soil. If art had formerly only served aristocrats of the spirit and the personal inclinations of the popes, it must now conquer the masses, and be the enticing siren who should lead back the doubters into the bosom of the church. A nervous artistic activity suddenly began in all parts of Italy. Not only did modern Rome at that time receive the form which it has preserved until the present time but everywhere men builded, carved, and painted. But the quiet, cool, and solemn art of former days was incapable of solving the new problems. A strong stimulating potion had to be offered, and the strongest effects achieved. For the gorgeous or the crude, that which was comprehensible to the masses, alone could win them. Into all branches of art this new spirit enters.

If the architecture of the closing sixteenth century was reserved and cold, so that of the seventeenth is pompous, oppressive, and confusing. The latter does not attain effects by quiet beauty of line, but blinds

the eye with the glittering splendour of material used, and to an even greater extent shocks the nerves, using music and incense as accessories. As if seized by wild frenzy the columns tower and twist. The interior, formerly evenly lighted, now seem to fade into the infinite. Here everything beams in brilliant splendour; there a mystic twilight spreads through gloomy chapels. Above, where formerly a flat ceiling rested, the heaven seems to open and angels carried on golden clouds storm about. If the pictures of the seventeenth century be considered in these surroundings the change in subject, form, and colour is at once understood.

As regards the subject-matter of painting, the change is this, that what the Renaissance painted most is now painted least, and what was once painted least is now painted most. The rarest subjects treated in the sixteenth century were pictures of martyrdoms. The Olympian joyfulness which pervaded the age disliked to linger over painful things. Christ had become a beautiful Olympian, Mary the queen of heaven. A time the conceptions of which were so Hellenic, did not wish to see its gods bleed and suffer. The council of Trent found the art of the Renaissance objectionable just because it did not adequately portray the self-sacrificing spirit of the martyrs. The true province of art was to move even the hardest heart by the presentation of the awful sufferings of the saints. As the Renaissance had praised the power

of the human body to enjoy, so the Counter-reformation therefore glorified its power to suffer. Pictures of Christ crowned with thorns and of the Mater Dolorosa form the central feature, and the legends of the saints were searched for the most shocking deeds of blood. Poison, dagger, and cord, drawing, strangling, burning—all such subjects were represented. St. Andrew is nailed to the cross, St. Simon struck with a club, St. Stephen stoned, and St. Erasmus is disembowelled. The whole technique of the torture-chamber is revealed, and instruction is given in all the accessories of the Inquisition.

As well as the representation of suffering, in the sixteenth century all deformities had been timidly avoided. Of the many representations of dwarfs, idiots, blind men, lepers, and maniacs enumerated in Charcot and Richer's *Representation of Deformities and Sicknesses in Art*, not a single one belongs to this age of joyful sensuality. In the seventeenth century, as in the days of Grünewald and the elder Holbein, sores, caries, lameness, blindness, and insanity are represented with joyful zest.

The representation of old age was also unpopular in the sixteenth century, and even saints like John, the desert preacher, had been transformed into radiant young men. Now aged prophets and hermits with shrivelled, starved bodies, flabby, leathery skin, and harsh weather-beaten forms appear in great numbers. There was no lack of models, for Paul IV., in order to

show living examples of penitent asceticism, imported into Italy real hermits, who, as in the days of St. Jerome, inhabited the cliffs of Dalmatia.

That all these paintings are only busts or three-quarter figures is likewise characteristic. The sixteenth century in its search for rhythmic movement had preferred the full figure. Now, since the chief emphasis lies in the ecstatic expression of the head, a bust suffices. These "longing half-figures with raised eyes" had appeared in all ages of convulsed religious life. In the days of Savonarola, Perugino was the first to use them: and when the German Reformation had thrown its shadow over Italy, Raphael came with his Cecilia and Titian with his Magdalen. In the pictures of the Counter-reformation the same feeling is expressed, but in a more abrupt and passionate manner. Repentance (as in case of Peter), inspired writings (as with the prophets), and castigation (St. Jerome) present ever varying motives.

The sixteenth century had treated principally antique subjects. Its pleasure-loving artists were more attracted by the joyful assembly of the gods of Greece than by the figures of Christianity: for in the former they could celebrate love and the radiant splendour of the nude. The Counter-reformation had, at least in its first stages, avoided everything antique. Domenichino even paints St. Jerome punished by the angel for his love of Cicero. But in spite of restriction to biblical and legendary subjects, chastity did not

increase. On the contrary, instead of the healthy sensuality of the past a perverse and hysterical sensuality appears. They had been too long accustomed to portray sensuality: the Venetians in their pictures of Venus, and Correggio in his *Io* sinking into blessedness. Similar subjects were still painted, only with Christian titles. What had formerly been called Venus was now the Magdalen, and *Io* was transformed into St. Theresa. Magdalen also displays the charms of her body and Theresa kisses with all the passion of which a woman is capable; but Magdalen's nudity creates no offence, because she repents of her sins, and Theresa's kisses are holy, because they are pressed not upon the lips of man but upon the feet of the Crucified One. It is a similar sensuality to that expressed in literature by Zinzendorf when he sings of the lance thrust and the wound in the side of Christ:

“ Du Seitenkringel, du tolles Dingel,  
Ich fress und sauf mich voll.”

As formerly they had searched through classic authors, so now they searched through the Bible for erotic scenes; and what they found there was not as harmless as the joyous legends of the Hellenes, but such scenes as Lot and his daughters, the expulsion of Hagar, the two elders peeping at Susanna in the bath, or Herodias confounding by her dance the senses of old Herod. If Judith is represented with especial frequency as the murderess of Holofernes, the reason

probably is that the thought was akin to the episode of Beatrice Cenci.

Other possibilities of smuggling in profane charms were offered by the legends of the saints. They painted Agnes, the maiden of thirteen years, who, because she would not marry a heathen, was brought into a house of prostitution; but her long hair was spread over her body like a mantle and angels brought her a garment. They painted Christina beaten by her father, and Apollonia whose teeth were torn out. Even more popular is the martyrdom of Agatha because in it sensuality and cruelty are even more closely related.

The possibility of returning to antique subjects was created by first representing only such as were consistent with the sentiment of the Counter-reformation. Such subjects were presented in antique martyrdoms: the flaying of Marsyas, Prometheus bound, Dido upon the funeral pyre, Cato stabbing himself, and Seneca opening an artery in the bath; in longing subjects with raised glance, like Lucretia or Cleopatra; in antique hermits like Diogenes, or in examples of filial piety, as Cimon in prison comforted by his daughter Pera.

Finally, an entirely new domain of painting was opened to the seventeenth century in its pictures of visions. In this domain also the religious art of the past had taken the initial steps. Giotto had painted St. Francis receiving the stigmata; for the artist of the

age of Savonarola the apparition of Mary to St. Bernard was of great importance; and Raphael in later life painted his *Sistine Madonna* and the *Transfiguration*. But in all of these works the taste of the Counter-reformation for the miraculous was not sufficiently emphasised, and the Holy Conversations of an earlier period were even less satisfactory in their unaffected simplicity. For the blessing of having visions is only conceived in a condition of religious ecstasy; the saint cannot be in repose, but must be lost in longing fervour and heavenly joy. The oppressive character of the sentiment is heightened when no witnesses are present, and Mary mystically floats into the cell of the lonely monk.

The same transformation as in the subjects may be noted in the forms. Under the overpowering influence of the antique, the late Renaissance admitted only of universal and idealised forms. Everything individual was considered vulgar, and in consequence portrait painting, which is compelled to follow nature, was only tolerated as a subordinate branch. "No great and extraordinary painter," it was said, "was ever a portraitist; for such an artist is enabled by judgment and acquired habit to improve upon nature. In portraiture, however, he must confine himself to the model whether it be good or bad, with sacrifice of his observation and selection; which no one would like to do who has accustomed his mind and his eye to good forms and proportions." In abrupt contrast to these



æsthetics, the seventeenth century saw the rise of a series of mighty portrait-painters: Velasquez, Frans Hals, and Rembrandt. Religious art itself again becomes portrait-painting, and crude fidelity to nature takes the place of general beauty. The supernatural has all the more wonderful effect when it towers in tangible reality in the material world. For the saints they sought poor old peasants with overworked figures and weather-beaten faces. The pictures of martyrdoms, formerly rhythmic compositions of swinging motion, are depicted with a merciless, brutal, butcher-like reality. In paintings of visions all the external manifestations of epilepsy and hysteria are rendered with naturalistic truth. Indeed, the conception of a "grand style" is strange to this age. While the sixteenth century had eliminated all accessories in order to attain a monumental effect, the seventeenth in its religious paintings heaps up fruits, birds, fishes, goats, cows, bowls, and bundles of straw—everything calculated to occupy the eye of the people—into veritable examples of still life. The desire to see such things was so great that when Caravaggio introduced a water bottle and a flower vase into one of his first paintings he awakened a storm of enthusiasm. Portrait-figures in contemporary costume, which the Renaissance had banished from historical compositions, are again introduced; just as in the *quattrocento*, only that the pictorial view of the seventeenth century is exactly the opposite of that of the fifteenth.

As the latter was the age of detailed execution and miniature painting, so the seventeenth is that of a broad *bravura*. The masters take pleasure in mixing fat, rich colours, in applying them with broad brush, and in arranging artistic details into a harmonious whole. The later *cinquecento*, which only appealed to the refined eye, had placed the principal weight upon the language of line. The seventeenth, which appeals to gloomy sentiment and found in music the greatest stimulant to awaken it, at the same time discovered the power of colour to strike responsive emotional chords. The effect of its pictures depends not upon lines but upon blending masses of colour; not upon rhythmic but upon pictorial composition, held together by the treatment of light, and formed in accordance with the masses of light and shade.

### 11. Religious Painting.

Naturally, such revolutions are not suddenly accomplished. The brothers Carracci, who as old men survive into the new century, belong also as artists more to the *cinquecento* than to the Baroque period. It is true that in their subjects the new spirit of the age is expressed; for they painted martyrdoms, visions, and ecstasies. At the same time, however, they are partisans of the antique, and completely under the influence of a worldly and mythological spirit. They extol Juno as much as Mary, and Jupiter as much as Christ. And it is especially to be noted that in the

treatment of the new religious subjects they use the traditional forms of the *cinquecento*.

At the appearance of the Carracci the problem was to prepare the technical foundation for a new development of art.

“Because the arts of design from day to day are losing more of their original beauty, and on account of the lack of a good school are sinking into increasing rudeness, we propose the foundation of an academy over which men, able and experienced in their art, shall preside; who shall exhibit to the students the most important masterpieces of Rome, in order that every one, in accordance with his talent, may imitate them.”

Such is the language of the Bull of Sixtus V. in 1593, authorising the foundation of the Academy of St. Luke; but the Carracci had at an earlier period followed the same path. They pointed out that the age of the Mannerists had been an epoch of superficial and rapid painting. In order to attain excellency like that of the classic painters, the student must in serious and conscientious labour abstract from the creation of the past great epochs what was most suitable to learn and teach, extract it and render it useful for the present. In order to accomplish this theory they founded the Academy of Bologna, that *Accademia degli Incamminati* (“of those upon the right road”) to which all the young people from Italy soon flocked. A rich collection of plaster casts, medals, and drawings of celebrated masters was collected as the materials of study, and a library of æsthetic books was acquired. The artistic programme

of the Academy is well stated in the sonnet which Agostino Carracci dedicated to the Bolognese painter Niccolò dell' Abbate:

“ Chi farsi un bon pittor cerca e desia,  
 Il disegno di Roma habbia allo mano,  
 La mossa coll' umbrar Veneziano  
 E il degno colorir di Lombardia,  
 Di Michel Angiol la terribil via,  
 Il vero natural di Tiziano,  
 Del Correggio lo stil puro e sovrano  
 E di un Raffael la giusta simetria.”

The Carracci are not quite as eclectic as would appear from this sonnet. Although they regarded the present as an age of decline, they could not themselves escape the change of times. It therefore happens that we find in their works many things which they should in theory have avoided, because they were entirely out of harmony with the classic profession of faith. They often attempted strong effects of light and colour and a powerful realism. There are etchings by them which have more in common with Tiepolo than with the *cinquecento*. Even the celebrated work upon which the three brothers proved their power, the cycle of frescoes in the Farnese Palace, is not mere imitation. The different elements are indeed harmoniously united. The antique, the Farnesina, the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel and the Villa Maser—everything is carefully assimilated with conscious eclecticism. For the stories of the gods on the ceilings Raphael's style rather than Giulio Romano's was determinative. The mighty figures of Hermes supporting

the frieze, the giants who hold the medallions of the ceilings, are familiar from the Sistine Chapel; and the mural decorations are antique statues translated into painting. But the masks, the shells, and the puffed draperies are in no wise classic but quite Baroque. However much they endeavour to adopt only the classic, they were nevertheless under the influence of the exaggerated, bombastic feeling of form which dominated their time, and they created new things in unconsciously following this modern taste.

They have, therefore, in the history of art a strange double position: they are at the same time Baroque painters and cinquecentists, heralds and stragglers. Often, without their own knowledge, the new spirit breaks through the traditional scheme; but more often their work is purely collected activity and learned retrospection. They laboured in accordance with rules and precepts derived from the past epoch, and in the application of these æsthetic principles to the new subjects which the seventeenth century demanded, the result was often a mixture without character. For in art form and content are identical. As little as the antique artist could have expressed the pathos of the Pergamenes in forms of Praxiteles, so little could the new fermenting wine of the Baroque be kept in the old bottles of the *cinquecento*. Their pictures of martyrdoms give the impression of anatomical demonstrations because over all the scenes, even the most cruel, the marble coldness of classicism lies. The

half-figures in which they depict religious devotion and ecstasy have a smooth, academic effect. As Laocoön was the model of their martyrdoms, so Niobe, the Mater Dolorosa of antiquity who just at that time had been resurrected, became the prototype of their emotional figures. Whether the effect was sadness or ecstasy, pain or blessedness, the foundation was always the same normal academic head. The works of the Carracci are important as the first in which there were border conflicts between the new sentiment and the old language of form. But the spirit of the Baroque and æsthetics of the *cinquecento*, the convulsed sentiment of the Counter-reformation and the serene beauty of the antique, could not be united into a harmonious whole.

Not until the works of their successors did the naturalistic elements become more prominent. One would imagine that a pupil of Raphael had painted the celebrated *Aurora* of the Palazzo Rospigliosi in Rome, so well has Guido Reni succeeded in transporting himself into the spirit of the past; so classic are the outlines of the light hovering figures; so truly cinquecentist is the colour in its bright and pleasing harmony. But the same master who wears the garb of the classicists with such surety has also created works in which the antique nobility of form is quite supplanted by the naturalistic power, the pathos, and the sentimentality of the Baroque. To these belong the great picture of the Berlin Museum in which he depicts with powerful naturalism the visit of the hermit Antony to the hermit

Paul. Here also belong certain presentations of the Pietà and the Assumption, a series of martyrdoms (especially the *Crucifixion of Peter*, in which he created the model for such subjects), and those numerous half-figures with eyes cast heavenwards, who illustrate, especially in their theatrical superficiality, the forced, artificial character of this new ecclesiasticism.

A greater realistic power, a certain primeval and coarse element appear in the works of Domenichino. While Guido sometimes became soft and theatrical, Domenichino always seems as a clumsy and crude and honest fellow. In his *Diana's Hunt*, for example, there is no academic emptiness; everything is of virile harshness and bronze-like precision. In his *Death of St. Jerome* he paints the decay of an aged body with astonishing *bravura*. How time brought truth to light and the pure teaching of Christianity triumphed over the superstition of the Renaissance, is the subject of his powerful ceiling frescoes of the Palazzo Costagneti at Rome.

As regards colour Francesco Barbieri, called Guercino, is the most important master of the school. His frescoes in the Villa Ludovisi are characterised by bold movement and powerful light effects; his *Burial of Petronilla* by fine colour and a naturalistic power. All the bonds which united the art of the Carracci with the Renaissance are here torn asunder; Guido, as well as Domenichino and Guercino, already stood under the influence of the man who had in the meanwhile an-

nounced, far more abruptly than the Carracci, the ideal of the new time—Caravaggio. The life history of this *uomo fantastico e bestiale* would yield a fine criminal romance. He was born at Caravaggio near Bergamo, where Lotto, the first master of the Counter-reformation, passed the happiest years of his life. His father was a stone-mason, and as his assistant the son went to Milan and for four years earned a livelihood at his father's trade. But on a certain day he stabbed a workman and fled, loaded with the curse of blood, to Venice, where Tintoretto, the second master of the Counter-reformation, crossed his horizon. In the meanwhile he had, without having visited an academy, learned how to use brush and colours, and was employed at Rome by the Cavaliere d' Arpino, half as an assistant, half as a servant. Here he was discovered by the painter and art-dealer Prospero, who ordered pictures from him. One of these pictures was bought by Cardinal del Monte, who conceived an interest in the young man. Caravaggio seemed to be in a safe haven; for the different churches ordered altar-pieces from him, and even the pope sat to him for a portrait. But the stone-mason could not be transformed to a well mannered academician. With wild comrades he wandered about in taverns, disputing and quarrelling, and always ready to plunge his dagger into any one who did not share his opinion. An act of this kind made him impossible at Rome and he wandered like a nomad from village to village, finally landing at Naples. Here, too, he re-



ceived commissions and the past was forgotten. But the demon again seized him. As the Cavaliere d' Arpino had declined to fight a duel with him, a mason's son, Caravaggio resolved to become a knight of Malta in order that he might as a nobleman compel his rival to give him satisfaction. He therefore went to Malta and accomplished his purpose. For the portrait of the grand master of the order, which to-day hangs in the Louvre, he received the cross of Malta and a present of a gold chain and two slaves. In gratitude for these favours he wounded one of the knights and was thrown into prison, but soon escaped into Sicily where he painted large altar-pieces in Syracuse, Messina, and Palermo. Not until his return to Naples did fate overtake him. The knights of Malta had hired ruffians who one evening waylaid him; blow followed blow, and, severely wounded, he determined to escape to Rome in a boat; for at the intercession of a cardinal the pope had assured him of pardon. But the bleeding man excited suspicion. He was held by a coastguard and placed under arrest, until his identity was proven. When he returned to the shore his boat had been stolen by brigands. Robbed of his possessions exhausted and dying, he dragged himself as far as Porto d' Ercole, where he perished from his wounds at forty years of age.

Think for a moment of the artists' biographies of an earlier day. At the beginning of the sixteenth century when Castiglione wrote his *Cortegiano*, that antique *gravitas* which he designates as characteristic of a

CARAVAGGIO



THE FALSE PLAYERS  
*Dresden Gallery*



perfect cavalier, was characteristic also of painters. They wandered upon the heights of life and were accustomed to associate with princes as with equals. This aristocratic generation was followed in the second half of the century by a generation of scholars. Their portraits resemble professors; they associated with scholars and poets, themselves wrote poems and books upon archæology, æsthetics, and the history of art; they arranged conferences in which lectures were given on the true aims of art. In Bologna, the seat of an ancient university, this learned art experienced its last after-flower; then the reaction came.

From the people themselves the reaction against the libertinism of the church issued. Not until pressed by the people did the church itself proceed to reforms. So also in the days of Roger van der Weyden, the people had furnished the first painters of the reaction. The aristocrats were succeeded by plebeians, the thinkers by men of nature, who could wield only the brush but not the pen. A new class, in immediate touch with nature but separated from the formalities of the academies, entered the development of art. They are all from the people, one of them the son of a mason, another of a day labourer. Not one of them visited an academy or received learned instruction; nor did they grow up in large cities, where the sight of works of art at an early period guides the taste into certain directions. They came from the country or from cities like Naples, which had as yet played no part in the artistic develop-

ment of the past. They were thus lacking in the advantages connected with development from a long line of ancestors. Their art is sturdy, wholesome, and occasionally crude. A cultivated taste schooled by study of the old masters like that of the Carracci could only feel indignation over this brutal crudity, this clumsy copying of nature. But such plebeians were necessary in order to break the ban of tradition. As at the time of the Revolution the guillotines had to be erected in order that the Third Estate should come to its own, so this new plebeian race of artists could only establish itself by force, poison, and the dagger. As in Castagno's days, they are all wild comrades whose names belong quite as much in the gallery of great rogues as in that of great painters.

Caravaggio's appearance is like the sudden irruption of some primeval force of nature. He comes from the country with the confidence of a peasant who fears nothing, and has powerful elbows to push everything aside that stands in this way. With the same barbaric abruptness as Courbet in our own days, he struggles against the academies and declares that nature should be the only teacher. To her he wishes to owe everything, nothing to art. The more wrinkles his model has the better he is pleased. Porters and beggars, strumpets and gypsies are used in his religious pictures, and he takes pleasure in callous hands, torn rags, and dirty feet. In harsh contrast to the Renaissance, which had recognised only the distinguished, the ple-

beian Caravaggio will acknowledge the existence of beauty only among the lower classes, and sets himself up only as the democratic painter who raised the lowest classes to a place of honour. His *St. Matthew* in the Berlin Gallery is a crude proletarian of uncouth greatness. In his *Death of Mary* in the Louvre, he paints the corpse of a drowned person with swollen body and clumsy feet, distended in the cramp of death. In his pictures of martyrdoms like that of Sebastian or his *Christ Crowned with Thorns*, he shows no beautiful youth, but a suffering man whose body is bent with agony. In a picture of the Madonna at Loreto a pilgrim with a torn, greasy cap in his hand kneels before her, and another shows his swollen footsoles, besmeared by the dust of the streets.

On account of this "apish imitation of misshapen nature" Agostino Carracci caricatured him as a hairy wild man, with a dwarf at his side and an ape upon his knee; Baglione denounced him as the Antichrist of painting and the destroyer of art. But history can only extol him as the man who was the first to plant himself firmly upon the new domain of the new century. While with the Carracci, as with the Mannerists of the *cinquecento*, rule still prevails, here a powerful personality speaks. None of the Eclectics could have painted a work of such power and grandeur as Caravaggio's *Entombment* in the Vatican Gallery. He was possessed of enormous ability, and his paintings are dashed off with wild *bravura*. Even the illumination heightens the power-

ful effect. Although he at first preferred the golden tone of Venice, he later painted his altar-pieces as gloomy as if the light had fallen from above into a cellar, or as if the figures were moving in a dungeon. Some parts are harshly and sharply illumined, others are lost in the gloom of the background. Although Tintoretto had previously used similar effects, it is perhaps no accident that the man who often sat in gloomy prison cells further developed this "cellar-window style." And as the church had to yield to the claims of the people so the plebeian Caravaggio triumphed over the distinguished academicians. Under his influence Guido, Domenichino, and Guercino developed from pupils of the Carracci into naturalists. He was followed also by Luca Giordano whose pictures of martyrdoms and those half-figures of aged, weather-beaten saints are to be found in all European galleries. Finally, the "democratic painter" was followed by those who proceeded from religious to folk pictures.

### III. The Genre Picture

The Italians of the sixteenth century did not further develop the genre elements in the works of the *quattrocento*. To paint scenes from daily life, or to give by means of pleasing accessories a genre trend to religious paintings, was not in the spirit of a time for which only that which was noble and significant had value.

But in the Netherlands, the land of kirmesses, the pleasure in such things was so great that, even in this

epoch of monumental conceptions, a few progressed along the paths which Quentin Massys had trod with his *Money Changers*. All the burlesque scenes which Lucas van der Leyden and the Little Masters of Germany had treated in their line-engravings found a place in painting. As it was necessary to appear so solemn and measured in religious pictures, they took pleasure in relating in such little works real, crude, and vulgar things.

The little paintings of Jan van Hemessen are therefore very drastic. He conducts the beholder into public houses where men drink with slovenly women, absolving his conscience by adding the inscription *The Prodigal Son* by way of a moral. Cornelis Massys, the son of Quentin, relates farces such as in our own day Schroedter and Hasenclever painted; for example, a driver who has allowed women to mount his waggon, and who while courting one is robbed by another.

Pieter Aertsen approached genre painting from another side. Just because the religious painting of the sixteenth century excluded still-life from its works, a reaction had soon to occur. For there were also painters who took more pleasure in these gay accessories than in biblical figures. Aertsen's works show how still-life was gradually emancipated. He painted fruits, vegetables, fish and game, whole kitchens with polished pewter mortars shining and yellow copper dishes, with plates and beer glasses, jugs and straw baskets. In this scenery he places the proper figures,



market-women, cooks, and kitchen boys. No episode is related; his pictures are large still-life with human figures, rendered without witticisms or humour, but, with simple objectivity and powerful colour. In this sense—because he placed emphasis not upon anecdotes but upon the pictorial—he signifies an important step in the history of genre painting, and bears the same relation to his predecessors as in our own day Ribot or Leibel to painter-novelists like Knaus and Vautier.

Similar kitchen and market subjects were painted by his pupil Joachim Beuckelaer, who took especial delight in the jolly life of the Amsterdam fish market. He conceived even the *Exposure of Christ* as a market subject with hucksters, vegetables, and cakes, with maids and peasants who are much more interested in apples and cabbage heads than in the Martyred One.

On the basis of these varied achievements Pieter Brueghel wrote the chronicle of his day. Like all the Netherlanders of the later sixteenth century he made the journey to Italy. He did not linger before the pictures of the great masters but he wandered about in nature and among the people. Like Dürer in his wanderings, he made a halt everywhere that a pretty landscape motive charmed him; made drawings of the cliffs of the Alps with the same simplicity as he studied the harbour of Messina; and rejoiced in the gay life of the Italian people. Upon his return home he found in the daily life of the north as much that was pictorial as in that of the south. His drawings especially make a curi-

ously modern impression. They represent the simplest things: a peasant resting on a tree-stump on the way to market, horses dragging a heavy cart over a dusty road, or a tired woodcutter carrying an axe under his arm on the road home. There are also studies of heads which in their simple and powerful realism might have been painted to-day instead of three hundred years ago.

In his pictures such simplicity was not possible, because in them, according to the conception of the day, extensive apparatus and humorous episodes were necessary. Brueghel only used his delightful studies as material for more extensive subjects.

At first the Bible had to yield the subjects. He paints for example a Flemish village in winter time. A division of cavalry, formed in strict conformance with military tactics into a main body and rear-guard, approaches from the road; the foremost have already dismounted and proceed to look for quarters. Men and women plunge into the street calling their children; others bolt the house doors: for these troops have received command to execute the massacre of the innocents at Bethlehem. Or a gay crowd, on foot, in waggons, and on horseback, surges along a road towards a hill—artisans and shopkeepers, clergymen and soldiers, women and children; the whole city is on its feet, for an execution cannot be seen every day. And this picture represents the *Crucifixion*! Another, a tax-collector's office with Flemish burghers paying

their taxes, is supposed to represent the scene of Joseph and Mary coming to pay their taxes at Nazareth.

To other paintings he gives an allegorical mask; a religious morning service he calls *Faith*, a group of poor people chewing with their mouths full, *Charity*, or a regular court session with advocate, judges, and public, *Justice*. Sometimes he develops pictures, as did Hogarth later, into moral sermons and introduces entire life scenes of a warning kind. The alchemist who has staked everything upon his invention ends with his wife and children in the poor-house, the quack who deceives people is thrown into prison; and the Naples picture of the blind men groping through the landscape is labelled with the biblical quotation: "If the blind lead the blind, shall they not both fall into the ditch?"

When, as an exception, he dispenses with biblical and allegorical titles, the multitudinous accumulation of comic traits must atone for the lacking moral. Kirmesses with numberless figures, skating scenes, and similar subjects, which can be related in a broad and detailed manner—such is the content of these works. His Vienna picture, the *Struggle of Carnival and Lent*, is a treatise upon all nonsense that can be conceived in the carnival; his *Peasant's Wedding* a treatise on intemperance. In his ice scenes all ludicrous episodes are narrated which could possibly occur in skating; or he heightens the comic effect by making the peasants bestial in their hideousness.

In this regard Brueghel is a true son of the sixteenth

century: an age which was accustomed to see nothing but gods and heroes could not conceive of the poetry of actuality. Daily life must be brought into humorous contrast with the ideal; for the opinion was that nature could not be represented because she was too ugly. For this doctrine Brueghel furnished the proofs by contrasting with the gallery of beauty presented by the idealists his gallery of ugliness.

It was impossible for genre painting to enter other paths until the art of the seventeenth century had broken with the doctrine of the ugliness of nature and had substituted for idealised saints men of flesh and blood. Human beings good enough to don the garments of saints were also beautiful enough to be painted in their own clothes: no longer as caricatured louts and heroes of ludicrous anecdotes, but with seriousness and objectivity. So Caravaggio, the first great naturalist, became also the first great painter of the people. By selecting, as did Courbet in our own day, the life-size scale for presentation, he removed the last hindrance to the treatment of such subjects. Genre painting thus took its place as an equally justified branch beside religious painting.

To Caravaggio's early period belongs the lovely blond maiden of the Liechtenstein Gallery listening so dreamily to the tones of her lute. Later the golden gleaming colour was replaced in such pictures also by the gloomy light of a cellar, and the figures became more primeval and wilder. He passed his time in obscure

taverns with lansquenets, gypsies, and women; and these people, whose society he preferred, are also the heroes of his paintings. For Cardinal del Monte he painted the gypsy *Fortune Teller* (now in the Gallery of the Capitol) and the *False Players* of the Sciarra Gallery, another version of which is at Dresden. In still another picture he represented a company of people making music. With such scenes a great new domain was opened to the following painters.

Among Frenchmen he was followed by Jean de Boulogne, called le Valentin, who came when quite young to Rome. His subjects are lansquenets quarrelling over dice or making music with the women in taverns. Even when he now and then painted biblical themes like the *Innocence of Susanna* or the *Judgment of Solomon*, he treated them in the crude naturalistic style of genre painting. Among the Flemings belonging to this group are Theodor Rombouts, who painted companies of singers and card-players in life-size figures, and among the Dutch Gerhard Honthorst, who varied the "cellar-window" style of Caravaggio by the addition of candle-light. Michelangelo Cerquozzi and Antonio Tempesta progressed from genre to hunting pieces, which in a century of great wars found a thankful public. Benedetto Castiglione added shepherd scenes with goats, sheep, horses, and dogs. Unlike the majestic sixteenth century which had only recognised one variety of historical painting, the seventeenth witnessed the development of all other branches.

## 10. -- The Landscape

The *cinquecento* held the same opinion of landscape painting as Winckelmann. An age which considered only the mighty forms of the nude human body beautiful had no sense for life in nature. Even among the Venetians no one followed the path indicated by Titian; not until the seventeenth century, when the bond of the antique had been broken, did landscape painting awaken to new life.

Like Caravaggio, Salvator Rosa, the Neapolitan, was a wild and restless spirit. A fugitive from a seminary of priests, he wandered as a lute-player and a serenader through the taverns of Naples. Then he began to paint; and, without having even seen an academy, he wandered with portfolio and colour-box about the neighbourhood of the city; roamed through the wilderness of the Abruzzi, the Capitanata, Apulia, the Basilicata, and Calabria, making drawings of all points connected with historical events: the wild cliffs of the Caudine Forks where the Roman army surrendered to the mercy of the victor; the marshy plains of the Volturno where Hannibal's soldiers wasted away stricken with fever; the jagged summits of Monte Cavo with the fallen cliff of Otranto which the Turks destroyed in 1480. Falling into the hands of robbers, he continued his roamings partly as a prisoner, partly for the pleasure he took in the bandit's life.

As an old man he looked back upon the adventures of his youth as upon a wild romance. The brigand

became a *grand seigneur*, the landscape painter a historical painter. He painted battles and combats of cavalry, historical pictures like the *Conspiracy of Catiline*, ghostly and fantastic subjects, like the *Ghost of Samuel appearing to Saul*; in clever etchings he seized upon scenes from popular and military life, and designed those weird landscapes peopled by centaurs, sea nymphs, and sea monsters, which are so strongly reminiscent of the greatest fantastic painter of our own day, Böcklin. The greatest number of his pictures in the galleries are landscapes; and, as in the etchings, here also he has points of contact with Böcklin and reminds us of the youthful works of Lessing and Blechens. His favourite subjects are not the serene majesty of the South, but romantic cliff walls and jagged mountain tops, the crumbling world of ruins of the Abruzzi. He does not see nature in the joyful sunlight; but envelopes the heavens with mighty clouds or leads us into the silence of mountainous deserts. Ruins and weather-beaten trees start upwards; mighty oaks are swept by the tempest, and threatening storms gather over gloomy chasms. The leaden miasma of malaria hovers over the withered earth or lightning strikes down from black clouds; a gloomy poetry of solitude, something passionate and impetuous, pervades all his works. In this respect also he resembles the German romanticists of 1830: by making the figures a commentary of the sentiment. As in the pictures of Lessing, monks and nuns, knights and ladies re-echo

the elegiac sentiment of the landscape, so adventurers, bandits, and mercenaries are the only objects which people Salvator's gloomy world.

Salvator Rosa is an isolated instance of romanticism in the seventeenth century. With him alone, the Neapolitan, a wild, passionate fire reigns, with all others classic repose. He alone chooses South Italian motives; all the others depict Rome. The reason for this was not only the fact that Rome was the centre of artistic activity, but also because the plastic appearance of the Roman landscape was in harmony with contemporary taste. An epoch in which the great historical painters stood in the foreground, could find no sense in the true charms of a landscape. The noble lines and plastic forms which painters sought could best be found in Rome. The Alban mountains with their lonely seas and distant perspectives, the Campagna with its mighty ruins and solemn, monotonous mountain ranges—such is the content of the heroic landscape painted at the beginning of the seventeenth century.

Even the Carracci, in some of their works, made concessions to the landscape tendencies of the century. Learned scholars in their historical paintings, they here feel themselves creators. In their landscapes an intangible and solemn repose seems to rest over nature. Albano's works have an idyllic and arcadian effect: green mountains with majestic trees and shady arbours, peopled by dainty cupids. A distinguished gentleman



living with his mistress in the country, he makes the impression of the Rococo master gone astray into the Baroque period.

The Carracci, as well as Albano, would hardly have painted these things if foreign artists had not opened their eyes. These strangers, who had often starved for years before they entered upon their pilgrimage to the South, were, when they had reached the land of their longing, far more receptive for the beauty of the Eternal City than the natives. The dawn of modern landscape painting approaches.

Apart from others, a genius by himself, stands Velasquez. For him there exists neither romanticism nor idealism, neither the elegy of ruins nor majestic line. In Rome as in Spain, he sought only the cool green, white, and grey harmony of colours to which his eye was accustomed. A half-wild garden, a white shimmering piece of architecture, a couple of people, and some marble figures are the elements of his Roman landscapes. As he was too distant from the sentiment of the epoch, Velasquez's Italian stay passed away without an echo. Far more important were the impulses which owed their origin to a Netherlander and a Frenchman: Paul Bril and Nicolas Poussin.

Bril, whose gay and kaleidoscopic pictures often appear in the galleries, was at the same time a fresco painter in the grand style. That he found opportunity to paint such frescoes in adornment of the walls of a church is characteristic of the trend towards landscape

during this period. Through painted halls of columns one looks upon impressive hills, by which distant perspectives the narrow chapels are changed into a laughing world. Thus in church frescoes modern landscape painting created its first monumental achievements.

Poussin is called a "primitive" by his countrymen, the French; and although the figures of his paintings reveal him as a cool composer, he looked upon nature with the eye of a primitive—a kind of Mantegna of the seventeenth century, at the same time a scholar and realist. In the midst of the Baroque period, from the ruins of the antique world he created painting anew from the very foundations. In a convulsed epoch he alone maintained classic repose; in an age in which painting was pictorial he was "*le peintre le plus sculpteur qui fût jamais.*" His youth was passed in bitter poverty, and when he at last trod the land of his dreams he could never again part from the solemn Roman landscape. His life passed as simply as that of an Arcadian shepherd. In the day he laboured in his workshop upon the hill of Santa Trinità de' Monti, whence he could enjoy a wide view over the Campagna. At eventide he roamed with scholars and poets in the environs of the Eternal City; filled his mind with her landscape; brooded in the garden of the Villa Borghese over the primeval past; and made sketches of those gigantic trees which in his pictures rear their heads so majestically towards heaven. In his work there is

nothing intimate, nothing homelike. Nature, as he depicts her, is a purely plastic, apparently soulless world. He sees only forms and lines; gazes upon the outlines of a tree with the same eyes as does a sculptor upon the silhouette of a statue. But the grandeur of his line is such that it alone inspires his landscapes with a solemn sentiment. He created a world free from everything trivial and insignificant. These great, noble mountain ranges, these mighty trees and crystal seas are combined with simple antique buildings in compositions of classic rhythm. The figures also are attuned with the elements of nature to one great accord. Many of his works, like the *Prometheus* of the Louvre, were probably inspirations for young Böcklin.

His pupil and brother-in-law, Gaspard Dughet, added nothing new. Although his landscapes with scenes from the lives of Elijah and Elisha in the church of San Martino ai Monti rank with those of Bril as the most important religious frescoes of the century, they reveal only the form of Poussin without his spirit. Even when he paints those storms to which his chief celebrity is due, he lacks the great and sustained harmony of his master.

The painter who followed him, on the other hand, has something new to offer. After artists had painted the permanent character, the firm lines, and the eternal repose of nature, they had yet to learn to express the changeable, the transient, and the evanescent effects of light. The rhythm of form and poetry of line had

also to be combined with the sentiment of light. The decisive steps in just this path had to be taken at the beginning of the sixteenth century by artists like Grünewald and Altdorfer. Gerard David's picture of *Christ's Prayer upon the Mount of Olives* is pervaded by a subdued bluish-white moonlight, and in another picture, *Christ taken Prisoner*, he painted the effects of torchlight. Among the Italians Giorgione had already interpreted lamplight, painted the lightning flashing in the night, and the fiery glow of the sun pouring his light over the earth. Many of Titian's, Salvator's, and Tintoretto's pictures are lighted by the beams of evening red and moonlight. But classicism had interrupted this development, and it was reserved for the seventeenth century to enter upon the heritage of the earlier masters. As Poussin, the master of line, can only be conceived as a Frenchman, so Elsheimer in his entire being appears a German. A pupil of Grunewald's in the third generation, he was called to become the first great *Stimmungsmaler*<sup>1</sup> of the seventeenth century, who opposed the power of colour tone to the clear elasticity of form. In his pictures the robust and powerful light and shade effects of Caravaggio are clarified into a poetic tenderness.

It is true that Elsheimer did not paint pure land-

<sup>1</sup> The nearest approach to the translation of this significant word is a "painter of moods." It is applied to those artists who use the landscape or some other subject as a means of expressing their own poetic sentiment, as was done in the nineteenth century by the painters of the Barbizon school.—Ed.

scapes; for he peoples them with biblical figures. But the relation of the figures to the landscape is different than with earlier masters. Their art was a species of historical painting. They found in the Bible scenes enacted in a landscape, and sought in the neighbourhood of Rome the natural elements needed for the completion of such narratives. Elsheimer's works originated through a different psychological process. What he first sees is the sentiment of nature, and then he peoples her with suitable beings. The sentiment of landscape produces the subject of the picture.

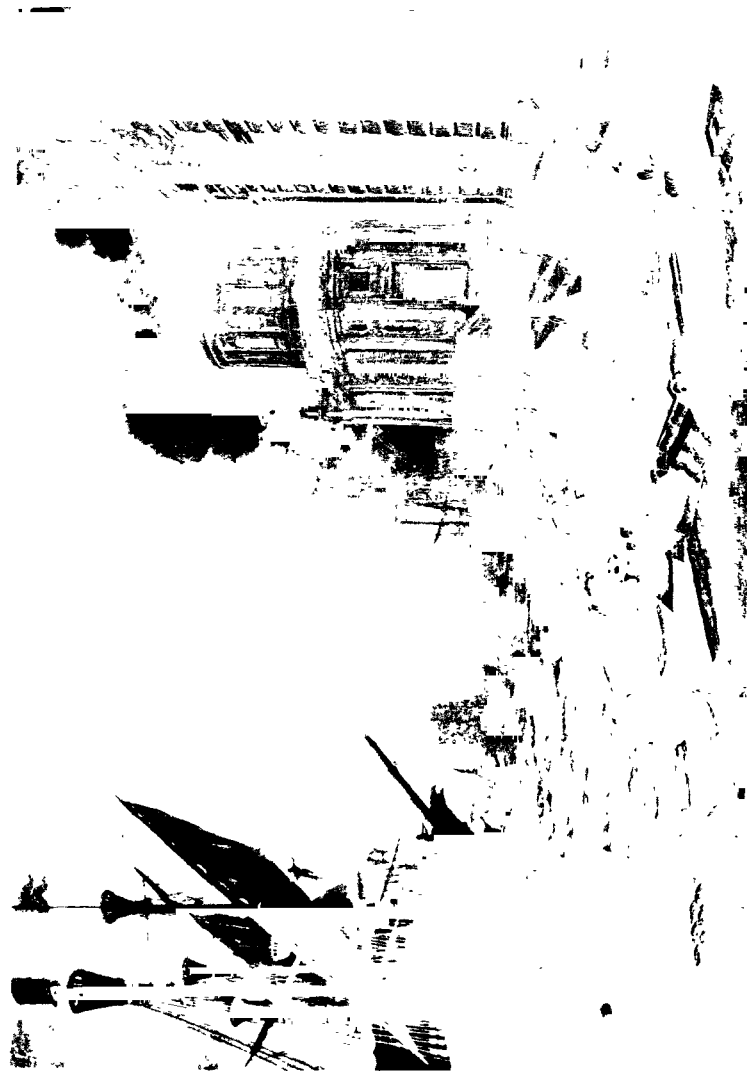
Whole days he lay, as Sandrart relates, in thoughtful contemplation under beautiful trees, and he became so thoroughly imbued with the sense of their forms that he could see them as clearly with closed as with open eyes. This serene and dreamy observation of nature pervades all his pictures. He paints the vicinity of Rome with its silent mountain ranges, its noble groups of trees, and idyllic valleys. But his observation is not confined to the solemn grandeur of its lines. At one time the light of noon, at another soft dawn, the weary evening red or pale moonlight spreads over the earth. Indeed, he often approaches the problem of the "double light." Silver stars twinkle, houses burn, and pine torches smoke; or the light of the camp-fire quivers in flaming red through the night. The *Flight into Egypt* especially gave occasion for variations like those given at a later period by Domenico Tiepolo. He painted it innumerable times under all illuminations.

In a picture of the Dresden Gallery, the full noonday sunlight spreads over the scene; in that of the Munich Pinakothek it is night: in the foreground Joseph with a gleaming torch walks near Mary, while in the background shepherds sit under mighty trees around the fire. From the sky the moon in serene splendour pours down her mild, silver light upon the earth.

Between Poussin the Frenchman and Elsheimer the German stands one who is at the same time a master of line and a painter of light,—a Lorrainer, Claude Gelée. With Poussin he shares the feeling for the majestic and the opinion that the landscape should be the scene of an historical event or the dwelling-place of gods and heroes. From the standpoint of line alone, all his works are variations of a single theme. In the foreground a mighty group of trees or a temple is pushed forward in order to carry the eye into the distance, and in the background a classic row of hills bounds the scene. These elements which he always repeats hardly change their position. But the light which vibrates among them is different at every hour of the day. And as Elsheimer always repeated the *Flight into Egypt*, Hokusai painted a hundred views of the mountain Fuji, and Claude Monet twelve times the same haystack, so also Claude Lorrain could all his life long depict the same temples and groups of trees, but it was each time a different picture. After Salvator had painted the struggle and the devastating effects of the elements, Poussin the rigid, linear beauty

of nature, and Elsheimer the magic of the moonlight, Claude sang the wonders of the sunlight and the mighty dome of heaven, which gleams in the morning in a cool, silver splendour, at noon like liquid gold, and at even like crimson. One loves to think of him as a poor lad, aimlessly leaving the parental roof and on his distant wanderings gazing up into the mighty sky; as a wandering journeyman sitting by the lagoons of Venice and following with his eye the rippling sunlight, as it played upon the waves and danced over the colonnades of marble palaces. For it was in Venice that he discovered himself: and however often he afterwards painted Roman monuments or the harbours of Messina, Naples, and Tarentum, the recollection of Venice seems to hover over his paintings; the memory of the city of light where he lingered to dream upon his journey. Not until the nineteenth century did another painter, the Englishman Turner, sing such jubilant hymns to light.

CLAUDE LORRAIN



THE DISEMBARKMENT OF CLEOPATRA

*Louvre*





## Chapter II

### The Religious and Realistic Art of Spain

#### II. Ribera and Zurbaran

**L**IKE the painters just mentioned, Ribera, who opens the history of Spanish art of the seventeenth century, also resided in Italy. At the beginning of his activity he had been directed by his master Ribalta to study the Lombard school, had gone to Parma and become so absorbed in Correggio that his decorations in a chapel of that city were for a long time considered works of Correggio. But much as he loved light and colour at the beginning, his pictures became at a later period equally dark and gloomy. Although it does not appear that he made the personal acquaintance of Caravaggio, he certainly honoured him as his master; and when he was called to continue this master's activity in the Spanish viceroyalty of Naples, he found himself in his true element.

Ribera was a bold and energetic spirit. He had in his youth defied all misery, hunger, and dangers; had without blushing worn the livery of a servant in order to avoid begging in the streets. This will-power, this unbending energy is also apparent in his works. Of

all artists of the seventeenth century he is the most powerful naturalist, and such was the power and force of his works that they exercised a deep influence upon many artists of the nineteenth century, especially upon Bonnat and Ribot. In contrast to the *cinquecento*, which had avoided the representation of old age, Ribera felt himself most at home when he could paint aged faces furrowed by the hardships of life—grey hair, swollen veins and sinews. A black background into which the dark garments of his figures imperceptibly pass, a mass of furrowed skin and wrinkled hands which he has seen somewhere—such is usually the content of his paintings. But he loved not only the harsh and overworked forms of old age, but also the deformed, which the art of the sixteenth century had never represented; and in his club-footed beggars of the Louvre he created a wonderful piece of defiant realism.

Such figures peopled also his larger works. As Caravaggio had represented fat women of the Trastevere and rugged porters as Madonnas and apostles, so Ribera depicted them as market-women and aged peasants with brazen bones and weather-beaten faces. His *Adoration of the Shepherds* takes place among a rude shepherd tribe of the Abruzzi. Brown, raw-boned fellows in coats of sheep-fell press about Mary. The still-life—the bread basket, the bundle of straw, the chickens, and the lamb—is arranged to form a complete kitchen subject. In his *Entombment* the body of Christ is that of a raw-boned Neapolitan peasant.

The gloomy inquisitorial spirit of the Spanish hierarchy is expressed in his pictures of martyrdoms. Here Bartholomew is flayed, there Lawrence is roasted on the grill, or Andrew hangs upon the cross, while a soldier tries to drag away the corpse before the fetter about his wrist has been loosed. Even when for a change he treads the domain of the antique, he selects martyrdoms, and places beside the Christian such heathen victims as Marsyas, Ixion, and Prometheus.

But the same man who here appears as such a one-sided painter of tortures and wrinkled beggar philosophers, has in other cases succeeded wonderfully in presenting soulful ecstasy, and occasionally surprises one with a melancholy type of maiden with great dark and dreamy eyes. Take for example his *St. Agnes* at Dresden and his *Immaculate Conception* in Salamanca, which reveal a psychic delicacy and radiant rendition of light attained by no Italian painter.

The path indicated by Ribera was followed by other artists whose activity falls not now in Italy but in Spain. The way was prepared, and a series of mighty spirits proclaimed with powerful naturalism what Ribalta and Roelas had expressed in the forms of the Renaissance. The seventeenth century was the age of the greatest development of culture in Spain: when Calderon wrote his sensual but mystic and romantic poems, and sculptors carved those master-works of glowing polychromy before which one to-day stands amazed in Spanish churches. To painters also the

foundation of monasteries by Philip III. and Lermo gave work in abundance: and in full possession of a most powerful technique they now became in every drop of their blood true Spaniards.

In Spanish art Spanish religion lives. Passion and fanatical asceticism, gloomy, ecstatic sensuality, and hysteric fervour are reproduced in their religious pictures with an unequalled naturalistic power. In a feudal state like the Spanish, with its grandees and princes of the church, portraiture also found such a soil as it had nowhere else. This is the age of those portraits in which solemn *grandeza* and faded weariness, majesty and insanity are united into such an indescribable whole.

Francisco Zurbaran is the painter of the clergy and monasticism. Before his paintings one has the feeling of standing in a gloomy cloister cell. A wooden crucifix hangs upon the whitewashed wall; upon a straw seat lies the Bible, printed in great black and red letters; here stands the prayer-bench and upon it a skull, warning of the changefulness of this world; there the row of books, all great pigskin folios. In the midst of this solemn space, solemn figures move about in ample white woollen cowls, the cross of the order upon their breasts; men who in solitude have forgotten speech and associate only with the saints of heaven. Sometimes they are ecstatic and wild, convulsed by the fullness of spiritual feeling, radiating like glowing stoves a light from within. But he often paints them also in

ZURBARAN



VISION OF ST. PETER NOLASCO  
*Prado, Madrid*



everyday monastic life as they read, write, and meditate. Instead of the wildness of Ribera there reigns with him an unspeakable simplicity, a quiet almost sober unpretentiousness. The objects about them—the cups, fruits, bread, the coarse stuff of the cowls, the folios and straw chairs are rendered with the objectivity of a still-life painter. If notwithstanding this his works create the impression of all that *terribile* which frightens us in Castagno's and Michelangelo's works, this effect is the result of the grandeur of his line. The folds of the great white cowls are statuesque in effect, and the silhouettes are powerful and grand. Like a mystic bandit, a giant of primeval times, seems the *Praying Monk* of the London Gallery; and the portrait of Peter of Alcantara with the sparkling eye and solemn threatening gesture is truly grandiose. Of the larger paintings in which he, the epic poet of monasticism, relates the legends of the orders, four scenes from the *Life of St. Bonaventura*, painted in 1629 for a church of this saint in Seville, have found their way to Paris, Berlin, and Dresden. But even these works are but poor examples of his art. Not until more has become known which is concealed in the churches of Seville and the mountain villages of Estremadura, will Zurbaran be discovered for the history of art.

## 11. Velasquez

A year after Zurbaran, Velasquez was born, and these two artists are united by the closest of



bonds. Although most other Spaniards delighted in tragic pain and wild ecstasy, there is nothing oppressive in the works of Velasquez or Zurbaran. Their chief characteristic is royal repose and their only difference this, that of the two pillars of the Spanish state, the church and the nobility, the works of Zurbaran reflect rather the ecclesiastical, those of Velasquez the knightly spirit.

Velasquez also painted religious pictures like his *Adoration of the Shepherds* and an *Adoration of the Kings*, a *Christ Crucified* and a *Coronation of the Virgin*. He painted landscapes, historical pictures, like the *Surrender of Breda*, and antique subjects like *Los Borrachos* and the *Smithy of Vulcan*, *Mars* and *Venus*. Yet one thinks little of these works when the name of Velasquez is mentioned, but rather of his portraits. He is for us the court painter *par excellence*. The entire enervated Spanish court of the seventeenth century, degenerated by family marriages, stares from his works as from a witch's mirror. No portrait painter of the world had, it would seem, more interesting problems. Whereas in the works of Titian and Rubens princes alternate with scholars and artists, beautiful women with generals and statesmen, with Velasquez the same figures always recur with tiresome similarity. Although his activity in Madrid lasted thirty-six years he hardly painted a picture that was not ordered by the king. Two journeys to Italy in 1629 and 1648-51 were the only events that showed him that a world

existed outside of the royal palace of Madrid. The same walls which separated the Alcazar from the common herd form the boundaries of his art. Within these walls as little happened as in the mountain palaces of Louis II. of Bavaria. Foreign royalties were infrequent guests: and of all the court officials almost the only one of whom we hear, except the minister Olivares, was Cardinal Gaspar Borgia, who returned in 1636 to the Spanish capital, after his fanaticism had made him impossible even in Rome. Philip IV. usually preferred to associate with subalterns, to whom he was as devoted as a master to his dog. His master huntsman, sturdy foresters, and their assistants were dearer to him than ministers; he preferred dwarfs and fools to sane persons. It was so pleasant to address these comical old fellows as uncle and cousin; so elevating to feel, in the presence of a crazy little monster, how like divinity royalty was.

These, then, are the personages whom Velasquez had to paint. We see in a dozen variations the pale, cold, phlegmatic countenance of the king and his brothers Carlos and Ferdinand: men with pale, languishing faces, long Hapsburg chins and protruding underlips, and tired, expressionless faces; men who were old when they were born. We gaze upon Balthasar, the heir apparent, at whose birth his majesty was "so pleased and contented that he opened all the doors and admitted every one: so that even the ordinary chair-carriers and kitchen-boys congratulated his majesty

in his innermost chambers, and begged leave to kiss his hand, which was most graciously granted them.' There follow the portraits of the minister Olivares, a few master huntsmen, and the sinister procession of fools. One is dressed as a Turkish madman, another has been dubbed Don Juan of Austria, after the king's great uncle; a third stands upon the stage declaiming one of his farces. Of the dwarfs, one with a mighty dog at his side is dressed as a Flemish nobleman; another with a mighty folio is occupied with genealogical studies; a third has an expressionless grin; yet another with a mighty deformed head stares with empty eyes. His women are as little beautiful as the men are interesting. Isabella of Bourbon and Mariana of Austria, as well as the princesses Maria Theresa and Margarita in their monstrous costumes, resemble Chinese pagodas rather than living beings. They possess neither coquetry nor charm, neither archness nor a friendly smile. Everything is sacrificed to icy pride and implacable ceremony. He who glances back into the past and remembers the beautiful, heavenly women who look down from the pictures of the Venetians, feels himself transferred in the presence of the works of Velasquez into a world of uncanny phantoms.

How is it, then, that notwithstanding this one turns the leaves of the book of Velasquez's portraits with awe, that in comparison with him Rubens seems a plebeian, van Dyck a parvenu and a dandy?



PRINCE BALTHAZAR CARLOS IN HUNTING COSTUME

*Prado, Madrid*



Much of this imposing impression is due to the fact that Velasquez presents to us a world so closely circumscribed. With other portrait painters the impressions change. Here we linger in a scholar's study, there in a ballroom: here upon the battle-field, there in the boudoir. With Velasquez one has the feeling of standing in a great, lonely, royal palace, whose panelled floor plebeians may only tread in felt shoes; a royal palace where old servants in gold-embroidered liveries pace silently over soft carpets.

The pathological elements of his subjects also give their portraits a strange charm. The Bourbons and the Stuarts who appear in the portraits of Rigaud and van Dyck are still full-blooded, healthy, and powerful. Whenever the court physician discovered that the royal blood was growing thin, he prescribed marriage with a healthy daughter of a foreign royal family, who furnished new life-blood to the race. The Spanish Hapsburgs, who had become exhausted by centuries of endogamy, are refined and nervous, pale and thin: of that fragile delicacy which occurs in the last scions of ancient families with whom the race dies out. There is something fascinating in the union of the two elements of which these characters are composed: illness and chivalry, decline and enforced will-power, weary indifference and the habit of tension. They are all weary, and yet have no time to be weary. All would like to be seated but the kingly profession allows of no relaxation. Velasquez alone had the opportunity

of painting children with such silken ash-grey hair and such big bluish eyes, who while they gaze at us say that the next year will be their last. Just because his heroes are such pale, enervated, bloodless people, his portraits had such an over-refined, aristocratic effect in an age that was still powerful.

Furthermore, it might be pointed out that the portraits of Velasquez served a different purpose from the representative pictures of the seventeenth century. Even Louis XIV. was in a certain sense a democratic king, who could be condescending—not with the people indeed, but with the “noblest of the nation.” He considered it necessary to impress them by his splendour, led an open life, and showed himself affable; for he even feared for his kingdom “held by the grace of God.” The pillars of the Spanish monarchy were not yet shaken by such fears. If Philip IV. had heard of any discontent among his people, he would have been quite as astonished as the good Emperor Francis; who, in 1848, when his adjutant announced that it was time to flee because the people were storming the royal palace, gave the surprised answer: “Well, are they allowed to do that?” For the Spanish Hapsburgs there existed neither people nor aristocracy. They are still princes to whom ministers deliver messages on bended knees; princes who invisibly hover over the people. True the Spanish court was the most costly in Europe; the liveries of the servants cost 130,000 ducats a year. But these expenses were not made for

purposes of display; they were things which a king might allow himself as a matter of course. The long passages of the Alcazar in which he lived, enabled him to move unseen among the most distant parts of the palace. When at rare intervals he set foot upon the plebeian soil of the outer world, he avoided the shouting rabble and took pains that no one should see him; sometimes, perhaps, leaving behind his monogram painted in large letters, *Io el rey*, in order that the people might know that the king, like God, was omnipresent. "The Spanish court," says a contemporary author, "is no court like the French and English, but a private mansion in which a secluded life is led."

The portraits of Velasquez, therefore, were not intended to be seen by profane eyes and had no patriotic missions to fulfil, nor was it their duty to remind the nobility that kingly power hovered over them. They were family portraits which hung upon the walls of the Alcazar and in the dining halls of the distant hunting-lodges or were sent as presents to relatives in Vienna. Everything which in other lands characterised the courtly style of portraiture was therefore not suitable in Spain. While elsewhere the crown and different accessories had to be displayed upon the table in order to show that the subject was really a king, with the Hapsburgs no such insignia were necessary. Every one who saw the picture knew: this is my brother Philip, that my uncle Ferdinand, this my cousin Mariana. In other countries princes show themselves affable or



gracious, or they sit in imposing positions; they move their arms demonstratively, and if they are on horse-back assume the air of a general reviewing his army. The Hapsburgs need no such display; for they are quite among themselves. They do not need to indicate by a pillar or a curtain that they live in palaces, nor to display their white hands or their costly toilettes. For all these things are understood among them as a matter of course, and the stage effects used to overawe the people serve no purpose among relatives. They have themselves painted in the situations which signify the great moments of their existence: when they grant an audience (God knows what self-control this requires!), when they are in their household or upon the hunt. A portrait by Velasquez was for them what a photograph is for us.

One might then aver that the distinction of Velasquez's portraits is not a merit of the master, but rather due to the surroundings. But how little this is true is shown by a comparison with the portraits which Rubens painted of the same persons during his stay at Madrid: Philip IV., Isabella, and Ferdinand. Before these portraits of the Munich Pinakothek one seems in the presence of another race. Philip, with Velasquez pale and tired, the withered branch of an ancient sapless tree, is with Rubens a fresh and corpulent gentleman. Isabella, cold and solemn in the portrait of the Spaniard, appears as a lovable, happy lady. The Cardinal-Infant Ferdinand, there a pale reserved young man

VELASQUEZ



PORTRAIT OF INNOCENT X.

*Doria Gallery, Rome*



with weary, feverish eyes, has become a robust and joyous prelate. If van Dyck had painted them they would not have been so distressingly healthy, but all the more vain and dandified. Philip would have coquetted with his blue-veined hand and assumed the pose of an Adonis; Isabella would have shown that her silken robe was very valuable, and that her handkerchief was genuine Brussels lace; Don Ferdinand, the cardinal, would have looked from the picture with a warm and sentimental glance, as if to charm beautiful women. Something soft and dandified, an obtrusive distinction, would have found its way into the portraits.

Both Rubens and van Dyck would have brought foreign traits into this highly aristocratic world; Velasquez could see it thus distinguished because he himself belonged to it. Not only did he live in the midst of the most ancient nobility of Europe, in the royal palace itself, loaded with all the titles of a courtier; but he was himself descended from an ancient and noble family. So great was his pride in an ancient family tree that he laid aside his father's name Silva, although it belonged to the most distinguished of the realm, and assumed his mother's because this was the name of a still more ancient race.<sup>1</sup> So much did he feel

<sup>1</sup> The author rather overestimates the ancient character of the artist's lineage. His full name was Diego Rodriguez de Silva y Velasquez. His father, Juan de Silva, was a Portuguese, who came to Seville from Oporto; his mother, Geronima Velasquez, was a native of Seville. Both were of the inferior nobility (*hidalgos*), and neither family used the title Don. It was a common custom in Andalusia to assume the ma-

himself an ancient Spanish cavalier and so conscious was he of his dignity as master of his majesty's household, that it offended him to be regarded as a painter. Nothing that could remind one of his profession can be seen in the portrait of himself in the Uffizi; neither the palette nor even the eye of a painter. Cold and proud, distinguished and solemn as a Spanish grandee, he looks down upon the beholders. From this endeavour of Velasquez to appear as a courtier rather than a painter the individuality of his style can best be explained. He is separated from the professional painters by a similar barrier to that which divided Goethe, the dignified minister of state, from poor *literati*.

According to the usual conception, the activity of artists consists in transfiguring actuality into beauty. They impress upon their models to show themselves from the most affable and winning side; pose them so that pleasing lines will result, determine the costume, and seek by pictorial attitudes to enliven the portraits. As painters they also love beauty of colour. Rubens, the powerful sanguinist, even in his portraits declaims *fortissimo* in noisy colours with blending reverberating tones. Rembrandt, the master of light and shade, moves in dim mysterious harmonies and has in his *Night Watch* woven about a simple portrait group the charm of German fable. Others consider themselves

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ternal in addition to the paternal name. Compare Justi, *Velasquez and his Times* (London, 1889), pp. 59 sq.—Ed.

*virtuosi* of the brush. Hals especially, a true son of his warlike century, seems to stand before the easel with the consciousness of wielding a hussar's sword instead of the brush.

None of these things exist for Velasquez. Of him is true what Nietzsche wrote about Voltaire: "Wherever there was a court he laid down the law of court speech and with it the law of style for all writers. The courtly language, however, is the language of the courtier who has no profession, and who even in scientific conversations avoids all handy, technical expressions because they smack of a profession. Technical expressions and anything that betrays a specialist are in countries of courtly culture considered a blemish of style." Velasquez considered everything that could betray the specialist of the palette a blemish of style.

For all extravagances of colour he had an instinctive distaste. He used neither blending colours like Rubens nor chiaroscuro effects like Rembrandt, nor did he even know of an interesting treatment of light; but painted only the cool, silver tone of simple daylight. So great was his moderation in colour that in the days of asphalt painting it was said of him that he did not understand the essence of colour; since all of his pictures were monochrome. As with colour so he also avoids conspicuous brush work. No sketch or clever improvisation by him exists. If with Hals the strokes of the brush have the effect of sabre-cuts, in Velasquez one observes nothing technical. The effect is obtained

without betraying the means. As Mengs wrote: "With nothing but the will alone Velasquez was wont to paint his pictures."

Nor does he otherwise recognise artistic considerations. In the *Surrender of Breda* he feels like an officer, and nothing can induce him for artistic considerations to deviate from military rule. He is a master huntsman in his pictures of hunts, and therefore gives no free improvisation like Rubens, but severe historical representation of the hunting achievements of Philip IV. In his equestrian portraits he feels himself the master of the royal stables and therefore never asks whether an attitude is artistic or beautiful. Everything must be correct and bear the criticism of the most exacting sportsman; the position of the rider blameless and the gait of the horses such as would not offend the royal riding school. Likewise in his pictures of royal audiences he is the master of ceremonies and not a painter. No ideal of beauty, but the rule of Spanish etiquette, governs his creations. He who more than any other would have had the opportunity to invent a costume which would admit of freedom and pictorial rhythm, not only confines himself strictly to the conventional, but treats the toilette with the professional knowledge of a superintendent of the royal, civil, and military wardrobe. Even less would he, for love of a beautiful line, have deviated from the regulations of the court marshal's office. However unnatural all these regulations were, his aim is only to paint this unnatural

VELASQUEZ



ÆSOP  
*Prado, Madrid*





with the greatest conceivable accuracy. Every offence against the regulations of court ceremony would have seemed to him ordinary and in bad taste.

From this severe conformity to court etiquette the aristocratic effect of his paintings results. The beautiful gestures, the artistically draped curtains which can be seen in other court portraits were considered as cheap, plebeian beauty. A genuine artistic beauty pervades the works of Velasquez. Just because he did not inject artistic notions into this ancient and noble world, his pictures reflect so overpoweringly the essence of ancient Spanish royalty. They seem works which no individual but the spirit of royalism has created.

### **III. Murillo**

When Velasquez died in 1660 his funeral was celebrated like that of a grandee. The entire court, the knights of all orders took part in the ceremonies. With him was buried the art of Madrid.

After the death of the master, his son-in-law Battista del Mazo, who had often made copies of his portraits, continued his activity in Madrid. Besides his copies of Velasquez, he is known by a panorama of Saragossa, the only landscape painted during this period in Spain. The court painter who became the heir of Velasquez's offices and titles was Juan Carreño de Miranda—no very happy lot, for his task was to paint the death struggle, the last convulsions of the Spanish Hapsburg. Mariana of Austria, the regent, who in Velasquez's

first pictures still preserved a touch of Viennese smartness has now become a bigoted old woman. She holds a breviary bound in black; all splendour in dress is relinquished, her jewelry laid aside, and her hair buried under the black widow's veil. Then Charles II. became the subject for Carreño as Philip IV. had been for Velasquez. The same pale cheeks, the same receding lower jaw, the same soft blond hair which Velasquez had so often painted, he also rendered. But the blue melancholy eyes are no longer the same: they stare without expression, stupid and empty as those of Niño de Vallecas, the hydrocephalic dwarf who concludes the series of Velasquez's pictures of idiots. The family tragedy of the Hapsburgs is now at an end.

At this time great masters lived only at Seville, where Spanish religious painting found its final expression. If in any case, it is to be deplored in that of Alonso Cano that the history of Spanish art is still so little known. He must have been an interesting personality, this young man with sparkling eyes, impetuous demeanour, and the manners of a cavalier, whose sword was always ready to spring from the scabbard. Together with Melzi, Savoldo, and Boltraffio, he belongs to that group which may be called the "aristocrats of art history." The circumstance that he was a native of Granada, the southernmost city of Spain, enables us to understand more fully the mixture of *brío* and proud chivalry which speaks so charmingly from his works. Before them one thinks of cavaliers fighting duels, of

challengers and seconds, of rapiers, florets, and swords. The lady over whom they are fighting is called Mary, Theresa, or Agnes; for in his hands Spanish religious painting was transformed into knightly love-service. Every visitor of the Berlin Gallery remembers the wonderful painting of *St. Agnes*, the patroness of chastity, the bride of God, staring with her great brown Andalusian eyes into the infinite. Every visitor to the Munich Pinakothek recalls the *Vision of St. Anthony*—Mary, proud as a Venus Victrix and tender as a Tanagra figurine, looking down upon the pale friar who, holding the Christ-child in his arms, looks up to her in soulful ecstasy. This is no religious painting, but such a love-song as the knightly singers of the middle ages daily offered to their gentle ladies. How daintily sits the crown upon the small austere head of the Madonna; with what exquisite taste he has arranged the veil, the chaplet of pearls, the palm and lilies! Or he depicts Mary with a child upon her lap, dreaming in a nocturnal landscape; she has no halo, but the stars of heaven are grouped into a glittering wreath behind her. Or he paints the *Entombment*, but not with our Lord's earthly friends gathered, as in former paintings, about the sepulchre; angels with radiant wings hover down to support the pale body.

For Spanish naturalism Juan Parejas's picture in the Madrid Museum representing the *Calling of St. Matthew* is especially characteristic. Uhde and Jean Beraud have gone no further in the union of modern with

biblical life. As the *cinquecento* had banished all portrait-figures from religious paintings so the age of the Counter-reformation depicts the spiritual directly projected into the material world. Parejas paints merely the office of a tax collector where Spanish gentlemen in the costume of the seventeenth century are seated, and into this room enters a strange gentleman in simple costume—Christ. Claudio Coello's picture of *St. Louis* shows how the seventeenth century, with complete disregard of the sixteenth, reaches back to the pious painting of the *quattrocento*. In the foreground stands a prince in the knightly costume of the period, and behind him is the Holy Family, with jubilant angels in the air. That Matteo Cerezo in his principal work did not represent the Last Supper but the *Disciples at Emmaus* is likewise significant for the changed views. The representation of a historical event is less congenial to the mystic tendencies of the time than the theme of Christ appearing as a spirit among the disciples. In another work, which bears a remarkable resemblance to a picture by the great idealist of our own day (Watts's *Love and Life*), he represents the guardian angel leading a child through life, that is to say, a new version of the legend of Tobias, so popular in the age of Savonarola.

Murillo drew all these threads together into his hand and entered upon the heritage of Spanish artistic achievement. The earliest examples of his work consisted in life-size folk subjects, such as had since

Ribera's day occupied Spanish painters. Indeed, in Germany, one thinks especially of the beggar-boys of the Munich Pinakothek when Murillo's name is mentioned. Here a couple of lads cower on the street corner throwing dice, there little girl-venders of fruit count their gains, or brown urchins eat their meal of melons and bread crust in dirty corners. Like Ribera, Murillo is in such pictures an incomparable painter of still-life. The velvety surface of the peach, the blue skin of the grape, the rind of the melon, the yellow peel of the orange, ripe fruit showing juicy cracks, the earthen jugs and woven baskets are painted with fidelity to the substance and a nobility of colour, such as among later still-life painters only Chardin possessed. One of these folk pieces, *Las Gallegas*, even betrays the fact that there were courtesans in severe, ecclesiastical Spain.

His paintings of the youthful history of Christ and Mary are also rendered in the manner of such folk subjects. In his *Adoration of the Shepherds* he paints, like Ribera, poor, sunburned people assembling curiously about the cradle, and adds an entire still-life of pots, straw bundles, and animals. If the *Holy Family* is represented, he leads us into the simple workshop of a carpenter, where Mary sits winding yarn, and Joseph, reposing from his labour, gazes at the child playing with a bird or a little dog. In the picture of the *Education of Mary* Elizabeth wears the costume of the seventeenth century, and Mary looks like a princess by Velasquez.

A whole cycle of such subjects was united in the hospital of Seville. As Raphael had painted in the Vatican the philosophy of the Renaissance, so Murillo depicted the ethics of the Counter-reformation: the works of Christian neighbourly love and the blessings of almsgiving. The feeding of the hungry is interpreted by means of the biblical miracle of the loaves and fishes; the supplying of drink to the thirsty by Moses striking the rock in the wilderness; the healing of the sick by the history of the man with the palsy at the pool of Bethesda; the office of the good Samaritan by St. John of God carrying a poor man who has fallen in the street to a hospital; hospitality by the story of the Prodigal Son. *St. Thomas of Villanueva Giving Alms*, and the Munich picture, *St. John of God Healing a Lame Man*, are further examples of this philanthropic naturalism.

In other works the earthly and spiritual are harmoniously united. Much in the *Birth of the Virgin*—the bed with mother, physician, the nurse, and visiting relatives—might have been painted by a realist like Ghirlandajo. But among the maids preparing the bath for the new-born child, the angels of heaven are busily commingled. In the *Annunciation* one seems to look through the attic window of a seamstress: a basket of laundry stands before Mary, but above the heaven is opened, and God, surrounded by circles of angels, gazes down.

The changes in the types of religious presentation

during this period are especially conspicuous in this painting. During the Renaissance Mary was the glorious queen; here she is a simple Andalusian maiden, and, be it noted, she is younger than in pictures of an earlier epoch. By presenting her as a child, shame-faced and timid as a nun, they emphasised all the more the doctrine of the miraculous birth of her Son. She must appear not as a mother, but as the divine being, the youthful mother of God. With this dogmatic conception which does not like to dwell upon the earthly relation of mother and child is also connected the circumstance that, as never happened at an earlier period, Joseph takes the place of Mary. He holds a lily upon his arm as a sign of his innocence, and the Christ-child with the gesture of *Noli me tangere* stands upon his lap. Even in the pictures of Mary the two figures are seldom placed in relationship to each other. They gaze solemnly upon us out of great deep eyes. If the Renaissance had changed the Madonna into a family idyl, the Counter-reformation reverted to the mediæval mosaics. Only from the dark presentient eyes fixed upon the beholder should the sentiment of the picture be developed.

Even when Christ appears alone, He is almost always a child. He wanders thoughtfully through lonely deserts; rests with a lamb by His side upon the pagan ruins; as the Good Shepherd, staff in hand, leads His lambs through a gloomy wood; meets the child John in the forest. He may not appear as a man who from



His own power became a prophet; for the mystery is all the greater if through a child who cannot think, the Holy Ghost reveals Himself.

There follow the many works with which he treads his most proper domain, that of miraculous apparitions, forebodings, and dreams. St. Francis was praying before the crucifix, when the arm of Jesus loosened itself from the cross and rested upon the shoulder of the mystic. A childless couple wished to make some pious foundation, but they knew not how or where. At night Mary in a pure white garment appeared to them, and told them it must be upon the snow-covered surface of the Esquiline. In the next picture they kneel before the pope and recount the vision, and to the right a procession marches to the new house of God.<sup>1</sup> His *Angels' Kitchen* of the Louvre is dedicated to San Diego, an Andalusian mendicant friar, who was such a pious man and longed so for heaven that during prayer he arose in the air. This occurred upon a day when the monastery, of which Diego was the chief cook, received distinguished visitors. When a brother and two cavaliers appeared in the door to look for the dinner, they saw him suspended in mid-air, while the angels of heaven, in the rôle of benevolent brownies, are doing the pious brother's work.

But not only the angels help the good man; even Mary descends to her worshippers. As in the days of

<sup>1</sup> This cycle is in the Academy of San Fernando, Madrid.

Savonarola, she appeared especially to St. Bernard, and if she did not come herself she sent the Christ-child. To old St. Felix soliciting alms, it appeared from heaven and nestled for a kiss upon his arm. Even more fondly than to this weather-beaten grey medicant it came to the young and refined St. Anthony, in whose cell the whisper of angel voices was often heard, and who when asked about it, answered: "The little Christ-child is visiting." Murillo treated the story in four paintings: first Anthony, absorbed in prayer, does not even observe the Christ-child, who is sitting upon his book; then he glances up, and, trembling with eagerness, embraces the warm, rosy little body.

The *Immaculate Conceptions* form the conclusion of Murillo's works. All painters of Seville had celebrated the great Christian mystery, but none more frequently than Murillo. Not upon clouds, as in the Italian examples, was Mary borne to heaven; but she is suspended serenely in the ether, which is filled with gleaming, golden, fructifying particles of the sunlight. Her eyes are not full of inspiration and longing as in Italian paintings; but glance astonished as those of a child gazing upon the splendour of the candles of a Christmas-tree.

In artistic qualities all of these works vary exceedingly, and the enthusiasm for Murillo is, at all events, no longer as great as formerly. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, when through the Napoleonic wars a part of his best paintings was taken from Spain

the name of Murillo signified everything: devotion, beauty, love, and ecstasy. He was the first Spaniard whom Europe learned to know, and his appearance was therefore the discovery of a new world. When later his predecessors became known, he lost much of his celebrity. His art seems in many respects a softening and an enervation of ancient Spanish virility; like a translation of Spanish idiom into a universal language. He possesses neither the chivalry of Cano, the power of Zurbaran, nor the wild force of Ribera; but a certain mediocrity, a soft, insinuating sweetness which renders him universally comprehensible; and he stands in the same relation to his predecessors as in Italian art Raphael to Michelangelo and Leonardo.

This gentle affability may be partly explained by the fact that Murillo belongs to a younger generation. The works of his predecessors are full of the ardour of battle; they live in the subjects which they depict. With glowing passion they proclaim the doctrines of Christianity, battle in feverish excitement against paganism in the church, and depict martyrdoms and visions amidst darkness and flashes of lightning. Murillo represents the consummation of the age. The wild bubbling source has become a quiet stream. What had excited the others was for him only a subject for elegant pictures. He is never crude, abrupt, harsh, or puritanic, but interesting, pleasing, and charming. The quality which the French called *chic* has conquered religious painting, and transformed the saints who in

MURILLO



THE IMMACULATE CONCEPTION

*Louvre*



the beginning were so threatening into dainty toy-figures. His soft and dreamy painting resembles a beautiful summer evening after the thunder-storm has passed, and the quiet sun on the horizon envelopes the earth in its rosy light.

On the other hand, the effect of his painting is less abrupt, less Spanish than that of his predecessors, because the world for which he laboured was not bounded by such narrow walls. Velasquez was the painter of the court, Zurbaran the painter of monks; the former's world was the Alcazar, the latter's the monastery. Murillo, on the other hand, laboured for the cultured circles of a large city. His pictures in the Hospital of Seville might be termed charity concerts, in which he reminds the well-to-do of those who suffer and are troubled. He depicts the return of the prodigal son as though it were an event in middle-class society. This consideration for the taste of the *bourgeoisie*, which wishes to see nothing that would cause unpleasant sensations, never left him. If Zurbaran and Ribera in their crude veracity resemble Flaubert and Zola, Murillo in his good breeding is like Ohnet or Marlitt. It is true that in one of his hospital pictures sick people move about upon crutches; a boy is having the sores of his head washed, and a man lays bare his knee, revealing caries of the shinbone. But these gloomy events are only represented in order that the beauty and the goodness of the dainty Samaritans may shine the more brightly. To the most beautiful maidens of

Seville, those brown, dark-eyed children described by Merimée in *Carmen*, he assigns the rôle of the Madonna; and even his beggar boys do not resemble the rude, dirty rabble of Ribera. He cuts and polishes their nails, makes them so presentable that even one who would avoid contact with the actual objects loves to gaze upon them when painted. This is the explanation why these pictures were considered masterpieces at a time when such subjects were otherwise tabooed, and why it was through Murillo that at the beginning of the nineteenth century the taste for Spanish paintings became so widespread. All others were too harsh, too aristocratic, too reserved. Murillo, the painter of the old Spanish *bourgeoisie*, spoke the language most comprehensible to the nineteenth century, and won the heart by the same qualities which once made Palma Vecchio, and later Angelica Kaufmann, Friederich August Kaulbach, and Nathaniel Sichel the favourites of their day.

After him there came only José Antolinez, a soft, rather insipid and coquettish painter, whose favourite subjects were blond Magdalens and Blessed Virgins in glory. With the younger Herrera Spanish religion became a purely theatrical sentiment. A child of the world, he dallied with the figures of religion as much in the manner of an operetta as Filippino Lippi had done in Italy. Everything is dissolved in the perfume of roses and violets. The last Spaniard, Don Juan de Valdes Leal, the dæmonic and gloomy master, is hardly

to be counted in this time. His weird and gloomy picture depicting the coffins and decayed corpses, over which a hand from the clouds holds a scale, already announces the blood-curdling etchings created in the following century by Goya.



## Chapter III

### The Sensual Art of Flanders

#### I. Rubens

FROM Spain the way leads to Flanders; for Flanders was in the seventeenth century a province of Spain. In this country the religious wars had raged with especial force. The year of the iconoclasts, 1566, was the acme of Protestant power. Singing psalms the Puritans marched through the streets, pressed into cathedrals and monasteries, burning and destroying every work of art they found. In three days four hundred churches and chapels were devastated, and the streets were covered with broken pictures of the Virgin, the venerable products of Flemish art. Then the reaction came. The conservative separated from the "storm and stress" elements; Alba appeared in Brussels and the land fell into his iron hand.

Flanders became the citadel of Jesuitism in the North, and the air of the Spanish court pervaded the land. Archduke Albert and his consort Isabella, the daughter of Philip II., who ruled the land as a fief of the Spanish crown, erected churches and monasteries everywhere.

Like black swarms of grasshoppers, bands of foreign priests descended upon the land.

One would therefore expect to find in Flanders an art similar to the Spanish; an art uniting gloomy fanaticism with the hot breath of ecstatic fervour. Yet the contrary is true. The churches have not the same gloomy effect, the mystic twilight that pervades the Spanish, but rather that of gigantic festal halls, where sumptuous magnificence and gold gleaming splendour greets the eye. In the midst of this festal magnificence hang pictures just as sumptuous and loudly reverberating. In Spain the colours are gloomy brown, here flashing red and jubilant; there asceticism and ecstatic fervour, here sensual elation; there world-forsaking mysticism, here exuberant vitality and power; there mortification of the flesh, here a full-blooded, over-healthy epicureanism.

It seems almost incredible after the puritanism with which the Counter-reformation began. Then artists had been forbidden to represent the nude, in order that they should not "offend God and give men a bad example"; even the sexless nudity of Michelangelo's *Last Judgment* seemed so offensive that the figures had to be clothed. The Flemish pictures are alive with naked human bodies, and these bodies are fat and soft. The art of the Counter-reformation, which began with the prohibition of the nude, ended with the apotheosis of the flesh. In the beginning antique statues were removed from public places, or if clothed were trans-

formed by change of attributes into Christian saints. The artists fearfully avoided the domain of the antique. The Flemish painters dealt almost more with the gods and goddesses of Olympus than with the saints of the church, and used antiquity as well as Christianity to sing the joyful praise of the flesh. Nor does the church call them before the tribunal of the Inquisition as it had called Paolo Veronese, but laughingly gives her blessing. The Catholicism of the Counter-reformation, in the beginning so incomprehensively rigid, became in Flanders a joyful religion, serving not only for the spiritual but also for the fleshly needs of her children.

The explanation of this strange phenomenon is to be found in the fact that the spirit of the Counter-reformation in Flanders had to reckon with the sensual temperament of a crude, pleasure-loving people. But in the first instance the difference in time must be considered. The development of art from 1560 to 1650 illustrates the history of a Counter-reformation. When the reform began the church was in danger; now her dominion has been restored, more splendid than ever before, and the church militant has become the church triumphant. The subjugation of Flanders, in particular, was an astonishing result of carefully planned Jesuitic activity. This triumph of Catholicism is reflected in the works of the Baroque period. In Caravaggio's and Ribera's time the pictures were solemn, gloomy, and defiant; now they are festal and joyful and representative of the age. With clanging music Jesuitism marched, proclaim-

ing its victory through the valleys of Flanders. It did not fear art, which had rendered important services in the labour of conversion. More quickly than the sword could have done, it won men by contrasting with the puritanic zeal of the iconoclasts the attractive pomp of Catholic pageantry. Humanism also, whose excesses had once given the impetus to the great movement, was no longer dangerous, and the church only gained by again posing as the protector of learning. Thus the Counter-reformation, although it had in the beginning assumed a hostile attitude towards the Renaissance, now entered upon the entire heritage of the Hellenic spirit of the Renaissance.

The painter to whom this great heritage was transmitted is named Rubens. He was, generally speaking, what Ghirlandajo had been in the fifteenth century and Raphael in the sixteenth. He belongs neither to the inquiring minds who attempt the solution of new problems nor to those whose works are confessions of the soul. In Veronese the Renaissance and in Murillo the Counter-reformation passed away; it was Rubens's achievement to reconcile the two previously separated worlds, the Counter-reformation and the Renaissance.

The art of the Counter-reformation in its hostility to sensuality had reached that psychic domain where the unnatural begins. The sensuousness of St. Anthony embracing the Christ-child is perverse, as is also that of the monk adoring the Immaculate Mary. After this condition of hysterical over-excitement, Rubens led art

back to a healthy Hellenic sensualism. His whole activity is like a great reaction against the spiritual tendencies of the Spanish school. The Counter-reformation had transformed sensual to spiritual: Rubens tears the mask of Tartuffe from its countenance and leads back sensuality to its proper domain. It is no accident that he is so fond of painting the passion of animals: lions, tigers and leopards, bears and wolves; for he himself has something of the character of a beautiful, powerful animal, and he stands among other painters like a stallion among horses. He appears in an age of heated fantasy like a centaur, like one of those beings in whom the human head is united with the horse's body, typifying the strength, wildness, and sensual desire of the animals. Instead of self-denial he paints passion, instead of psychic ecstasy overflowing physical power. The excited visions of the pietists he confronts with healthy animal desire, the spiritual erotics of Theresa with the passion of primeval man. In a country where religion had caused the most blood to flow a painter extolled the eternal procreative powers of nature. His appearance in the history of painting signifies a similar moment to what art had experienced a hundred years earlier, when the asceticism of the epoch of Savonarola was followed by the triumph of sensuality. But the works of those days seem tame and modest in comparison to the orgy which now began. It was just this fruitless psychic exaltation into which the new Catholicism had fallen that excited sensuality

to the fever pitch. Therefore it now seemed as if the dykes had burst. Like the irresistible flood was the onward rush of sensuality, overflowing and tearing down everything before it.

His *Kirmess* of the Louvre and those social subjects which he called *conversations à la mode* form the introduction to his work. In the *Kirmess* men and women join in a wild orgy not before a tavern door, but upon a wide open field. In the reckless dance one fellow has thrown his arm about the body of a woman; another, shouting, lifts his partner into the air; a third seizes his closely, pressing her at the same time with arms, legs, breast, and lips; yet another has thrown his to the ground. In more distinguished circles there is greater propriety, but the theme is likewise love. Before a fountain in the form of a female statue from whose full breasts thick streams of water spout, ladies and gentlemen are seated. Here a couple assume the position for a dance; there young men play the lute; there again beautiful women, with cupids hovering over, approach. The *santa conversazione* of the Renaissance has been transformed into the *conversation à la mode*. These two pictures reveal all the qualities of Rubens. As the Flemish people are, so they wish their saints to be. Although Rubens's activity included all branches of painting—religious, mythological, landscape, portrait, and animal—it is all held together by one bond: the warm-blooded, fiery sensuality pulsating through all. After men had for so long been

consumed by hysteric longing, the necessity of holding warm and living flesh in their arms was so great that, with all the ostensible difference of the pictures, the theme is at bottom always the same: the apotheosis of the flesh.

The beholder must therefore not expect to find very edifying qualities in Rubens's religious pictures. All the delicate, fine shades of sentiment which the old masters expressed are strange to him. He has a feeling only for the crude, massive, and sensually powerful. Instead of genuine feeling and soul, one finds in Rubens's pictures only æsthetic poses and fat human flesh. All his holy women are so mighty in flesh and have such corpulent bodies that one has little belief in their sanctity. All of his male saints are colossal fellows who are impressive more by reason of athletic, muscular power than psychic greatness. The spirit of Christianity is so transformed into its opposite that even the old doctrine of the mortification of the flesh is expressed by means of figures of the greatest imaginable corpulency.

From the Old Testament he selects scenes like *Susanna's Bath* or the *Captivity of Samson*, which give opportunity for the introduction of voluptuous female bodies or of pleasing his stormy sentiment by battle and slaughter. Mary, the spotless maiden of Spanish art, here resembles rather the Aphrodite Pandemos. A thick garland of fruit which fat-cheeked sturdy angels wind about the picture heightens the succulent,

RUBENS



THE HOLY FAMILY, WITH SAINTS ELIZABETH AND FRANCIS  
*Metropolitan Museum, N. Y.*





sensual effect. If instead of Mary other saints (Magdalen, Cecilia, or Catherine) are painted, the change of name necessitates no change of character. It is always the same voluptuous woman of Brabant, with the décolleté clinging silk dress. As he loves the *Adoration of the Kings* only because it gives opportunity to display pomp and splendour and to let the sun's rays glitter upon damask robes, so in the *Slaughter of the Innocents*, where the sentiment is one of suffering and gloomy despair, he preserves the same sensual qualities. The *Crucifixion of Christ* gives the opportunity of painting noble, manly bodies of the highest muscular development; the risen Lazarus is a robust athlete, whom the sojourn in the grave had not injured, and his sisters also use the opportunity to display their mighty forms. As in this case there is nothing of the mysteries of death, so the repentant sinners bending before the Redeemer show neither regret nor repentance. Christ is a beautiful man with noble gestures, and Magdalen a voluptuous sinner, whose contrition is not very deep. Even the *Last Judgment*, in which the old masters were wont to express the whole faith of their childish souls, is for Rubens only a cascade of human bodies affording him the opportunity to juggle with the nude and scatter them through the air like a giant emptying a tub of colossal fishes.

The antique is not necessarily the domain of the senses. When one hundred years earlier Mantegna painted his antique pictures, he sought with scientific

severity to restore the image of the Roman world, its architectural forms and costumes, its implements and customs. In contrast to this intellectual classicism contemporary Romanticists sought antiquity with the spirit. For Piero di Cosimo, Greece was a vanished, enchanted kingdom, the land of witchcraft and fable; but Botticelli, the disciple of Savonarola, remained even in his antique pictures a Christian painter. Not the stupefying perfume of the roses of Aphrodite but the sentiment of the cloister is wafted from his pictures. One could think of his Venus sitting, like silent Mary, upon a festal throne crowned with cold white flowers. Then follow the pictures of Correggio and Sodoma, who endowed the figures of the antique world with the quivering, erotic sentiment of the age of Leonardo; and further those works of the High Renaissance which imbued the antique with majestic nobility. Before Titian's pictures one has the feeling of tarrying in Hellenic *thermæ*, where in classic restfulness noble and distinguished figures move about. A change came with Poussin, who, as a follower of Mantegna and a predecessor of Schinkel, sought, with all the accessories of his great scholarship, to restore the architecture and the applied arts of the ancients. Ribera and the other painters of martyrdoms discovered that among the Greeks also martyrs had been flayed and chained. With Rubens the antique is a great butcher-shop.

Upon the subjects which he portrayed a book has been written, in which it is proved that in his two hun-

dred and eighty mythological pictures nearly all the scenes are treated which occur in the works of Homer, Virgil, Ovid, Plutarch, and Livy. But this achievement of science is love's labour lost; for Rubens only treasured the antique because he took pleasure in the strong and healthy female nudes and because it gave him the opportunity to depict exuberant power and stormy movement. After the transcendental longing and mystic ecstasy of an earlier day men wished to see flesh. He therefore knows no difference of types. Neither majestic Juno, nor slender and supple Minerva, nor chaste and severe Diana exists for him; the same fat heroines with straw-coloured hair, watery blue eyes, and mighty hips always recur. Corpulent, sturdy, and piquant is Venus, but just as fleshy is Diana, the virginal goddess of the chase, as if she were more accustomed to repose upon downy cushions than, spear in hand, to follow the stag. It is characteristic of Rubens that, often as he represented Venus, the type of the goddess reposing, which was so popular during the Renaissance, never once occurs. Easy repose was no theme for Rubens, who could only conceive of a voluptuous body in motion or glowing with passion. Jupiter approaches the fair Antiope, Amazons join in battle, the Dioscuri carry off the daughters of Leucippus, centaurs gallop across the landscape in pursuit of a maiden, or satyrs assault Diana's nymphs. These pictures of satyrs, introducing the theme, "And in glowing passion the faun held the nymph fast," are introduced in ever new

variations; and bacchanalia treating *fortissimo* the theme of drunkenness and passion form the acme of Rubens's glorification of stormy sensualism. Great masses of colossal femininity are displayed; in untamed passion the distended bodies press each other; bacchic pairs in wild sensual embrace storm about. Thus the hysteria of the earlier day is followed by satyriasis.

His allegorical pictures are distinguished from the mythological only by their titles. He paints the four parts of the world sitting together united only by love, surrounded by powerful animals and the symbols of truthfulness. He models a historic theme like the *Life of Maria de' Medici*<sup>1</sup> in such a manner that it is at the same time a hymn to human flesh. Although he here portrays the age in which he had himself lived, and diplomatic events in which he had taken part, he does not confine himself to the historic costumes, or even to historic subjects, but sets all Olympus in motion. In the midst of the assembly of historical personages, nude geniuses, gods, and goddesses are mingled. Water nymphs guide the ships of Queen Maria, and sturdy *putti* carry her heavy brocaded train. It might be expected that the figure of Truth who is lifted aloft by Time would be naked; but the gloomy fates spinning the thread of the queen's life also gleam in voluptuous nudity.

His landscapes form a supplement to this tendency.

<sup>1</sup> The author here refers to the series of the twenty-four decorations for the Luxembourg Palace, Paris, painted after Rubens's designs by his pupils, and now occupying a separate room in the Louvre.

He paints neither characteristic selections from nature nor a barren landscape of delicate restrained tones. As in his historical painting he loves only flesh and corpulency, and knows only the two poles of overflowing sensuality and raging struggle, so as a landscapist he has painted nature only in opulent comfort or in moments of upheaval when elementary powers are let loose. In the foreground of one of his Munich pictures a cow is being milked whose fat swollen udder symbolises the sentiment pervading the earth. In another picture a rainbow appears in the heavens; the struggle of the elements is past, everything glitters with moisture, and the trees rejoice like fat children who have just had their breakfast. At Windsor, Vienna, and Florence other landscapes are preserved in which the power of the elements is let loose; a raging storm dashes over mighty tree-tops, and lightning strikes down from storm-laden clouds. The waters break their barriers, sweeping away ancient trees and mighty cattle. Sometimes he tells of all the earth's delight when fructifying rain descends; of fat steers driven to pasture; of Flemish peasant women with ripe sheaves of grain striding over the rich soil of Brabant. Passion and fruitfulness, desire and relief—such are his themes.

In speaking of Rubens's portraits one first thinks of *Helène Fourment*, the spicy blonde whom he married in 1630; for it is characteristic of this master that at the age of fifty-three he married a girl of sixteen years.

It is no less significant that it was Helène; for in her he found the genius of his art. Not many thoughts were treasured in her pretty animal head, but she was healthy, full-blooded, and overflowing with life—a real Rubens. And as he married a woman who appeared as if he himself had painted her, he painted others as if they belonged to Helène's family. Whether aristocrats or scholars, gentlemen or ladies, they are all of blooming, exuberant life, of overflowing, full-blooded power. Although they wear the pompous garments of the seventeenth century, they seem to live in a paradisiac condition; not "sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought," but more bodies than souls, more animal than spiritual. Even the personages whom he painted in 1628 at the Spanish court have not the withered charm of a waning race. The weary Philip IV., cold Isabella of Bourbon, and pale Ferdinand are transformed into fresh, joyful, healthy beings. As in his historical paintings, so also in his portraits he proclaims the doctrine that physical and spiritual health are the greatest treasures bestowed upon mankind.

As our own time cannot boast of such health, Rubens's works seem stranger than those of the remaining masters of the seventeenth century. We are too much accustomed to subtle and delicate charms to endure this eternal *fortissimo*. We are too weakly, too nervous for this crude, animal intoxication of the senses to have any further effect than to frighten us. But we can understand that after an age of oppressive, cerebral

RUBENS



CASTOR AND POLLUX CARRYING OFF THE DAUGHTERS OF LEUCIPPUS

*Munich Gallery*





erotics such a perversely healthy sensuality must have followed. That Rubens himself regarded this activity in this spirit is proved by the motto over the door of his workshop: *Mens sana in corpore sano*.

## II. The Contemporaries of Rubens

Corpulent Flemish healthfulness is the characteristic also of other painters who were at the same time active in Flanders. Whether they paint nude women, animals, or landscapes, they are all able workmen, sensual and coarse in spirit; men who in their overflowing health take intense delight in the material world.

Jacob Jordaens in particular is a genuine Flemish bear, and compared with the aristocratic Rubens a clumsy plebeian. His portrait of himself indicates this difference. In contrast to Rubens, who in all of his pictures wears a plush coat and golden chain, Jordaens, the descendant of a dealer in second-hand clothes, looks like a coarse-grained proletarian. The fact that he was a Calvinist gave his painting a different character. It has only the Flemish heaviness and nothing of the noisy swing, the festal pompousness of the art of the Jesuits. He delights in massive shoulders, plump bodies, the brown fatty skins of satyrs, and the odour of the stable; and heaps up fishes, geese, chickens, pigs, sausages, eggs, milk, bread—fat and heavy nutriment—beside the figures of his pictures. In his *Adoration of the Shepherds* at Antwerp, weather-browned fellows

unwashed and uncombed, press forward towards a fat peasant woman. A child in a yellow jacket representing Jesus holds an egg and a bird's nest; a great dog and a woman with a mighty milk-pot stand beside him. Under the title of the *Prodigal Son* or *Noah's Ark* he paints animal pieces of exuberant power. The scene of the youthful *Christ Teaching in the Temple* is laid in a tavern, where the young lad astonishes fat burghers by his answers. The only antique picture that he painted is a carousal: the *Infant Jupiter Nourished by the Goat Amalthea* in the Antwerp Gallery. The obese, pussy nymph, the goat with her overflowing udders; the fat little Jupiter who, although holding the milk bottle, still yells for nourishment; the brown satyr and the succulent things lying upon the ground—all are highly characteristic of Jordaens, the painter of gluttony and love.

Usually he dispenses even with biblical and mythological titles. The orgies of a kirmess are his true domain. In the *Festival of the Three Kings* an old man with a pouch sips from his wine-glass, a soldier embraces a fat maiden: all drink, shout, or eat. One has gone so far that his paunch will no longer hold the load, and even the cat staggers about, as if drunken, upon the floor. If instead of the above subject the proverb *As the old sang so the young twitter* is treated, there is little change. He only paints the joy of gluttony, how man eats, drinks, and digests; a Gargantua with an enormous appetite who

has seated himself in the navel of the nourishing earth.

The following artists laboured more in the pompous, swinging style of Rubens: Abraham van Diepenbeeck, Theodor van Thulden, Cornelis Schut, and Jaspar de Crayer. Diepenbeeck used the theme of the *Flight of Clælia*, and Thulden the *Triumph of Galatea* to display female bodies from all sides. Schut and Crayer supplied the need for religious pictures: in the beginning naturalistic and crude, later flashy and dazzling.

As a portrait painter Cornelis de Vos developed a great activity by the side of Rubens, and his portraits are characteristic of the representative courtly spirit which under the influence of Spanish etiquette came into Flemish family life. He painted seldom individual portraits, but almost always monumental family groups. All of these people seem to dwell in palaces. The background is a pompous columnar architecture with boldly puffed and broadly falling curtains; or else the family is seated upon a veranda, with an open prospect on the palace and garden. Vos is older than Diepenbeeck and Jordaens, as is betrayed by his severe and almost rigid manner. Instead of the picturesque breadth of the younger generation, incisive drawing is the prevailing feature of his work, which is treated in the manner of Antonis Mor and Frans Pourbus. Of his smaller portraits, the *Steward of the Guild of St. Luke*, in the Museum of Antwerp, and that of his little daughter in the Berlin Gallery are celebrated. In the forme-

an ancient cellarer is polishing the table furnishings of the guild-house—an indication of the luxuriant life led by the artists of gay Antwerp. His portraits of children are represented eating cherries and peaches—an indication that with Vos, as with all Flemings, gormandising plays a prominent part.

The family groups of Gonzales Coques are distinguished from those of Vos by their smaller size only. The impressive elegance is the same: every one wears the festal costume of the court; the walls are adorned with gobelins and pictures; columns and majestically falling curtains seem to belong to the necessary furnishings of every merchant's house.

The change experienced by landscape painting under the influence of Rubens is shown by a comparison of the works which originated before and after his activity. Lucas van Valckenborch, Joos de Momper, Jan Brueghel, Hendrik van Balen, Roelant Savery, Sebastian Vrancx, David Vinckboons, and Alexander Keirinx, although they survive into the seventeenth century, have more in common with Patinir than with Rubens. Yet they were innovators. Patinir and Blas had not attempted to render distant views: their backgrounds did not recede, but were painted higher than the foreground. Accustomed to microscopic vision, they did not observe that in the distance the outlines fade and colours change. At a distance of miles the branches and leaves of their trees retain the same incisive forms and the same bright colour as objects of the foreground.

Important progress was made by Gillis van Coninxloo. He was the first of Flemish landscape painters to realise the effect of air and light upon the appearance of things, and sought to express the fading outlines and the softened colours in the distance. In his foregrounds everything glitters in sharp brown, green, or blue; in a second plane the foliage is not drawn leaf for leaf but tufty; the dark green changes to a lighter bluish-green, and the colour of the tree-trunks from brown into greenish. Farther in the distance the colours become even lighter and fainter. Proud of his discovery of the three planes, Coninxloo did not tone down his colours gradually but distinguished them as if brown, green, and grey curtains divided nature into separate planes. The same opinion was maintained by those who followed him. Instead of their pictures becoming more uniform, the gaudiness constantly increased. A grey background with light blue perspective and dark grey hills; in sharp contrast a foreground of bright green and in the midst of this highly coloured nature little figures in gleaming garments—such is the sole content of their paintings. With jubilant pleasure they commingled bright plants and bright costumes, gaily-plumaged parrots and Olympian gods, ruins, cliffs, and waterfalls, in bright bouquets of red, green, and blue. Every picture resembles a palette upon which the most conspicuous colours are whimsically commingled.

In this preference for beautiful, succulent, and voluptuous colours they are genuine Flemish masters,

except that the richness of detail, the clear and diminutive character of their works are no longer in harmony with the taste of a later period. "I confess that I, in consequence of a natural gift, am more adapted to paint very large pictures than small curiosities." These words of Rubens are characteristic for the works of the following artists.

A single one, Jan Silberechts, would not be recognised as a Fleming. For his landscapes are neither rhythmic nor do they shimmer in moist brilliancy. In a picture at Munich he depicts a dairy-maid and a little girl sleeping by the roadside; pewter milk vessels are in front of them, and a few sheep are grazing by the roadside. The entire picture is composed of white, blue, light green, and grey. His *Peasant's House* at Brussels and *Canal* at Hanover are likewise extracts from nature with a directness and truth approaching the *plein air* painting of the present day. As Silberechts was one of the first landscape painters to discover that sunlight envelopes things not in a golden but in a silvery tone, he has in his modest, cool grey pictures created works of a very modern delicacy.

All the others are broad, dashing painters, who endeavour to obtain pompous and festive effects. They mix rich colours and cover yards of canvas with trees, rivers, hills, and valleys. Rubens's flashily gleaming and noisily dramatic style of figure painting is determinative for them also. Two hills on either side of a sandy road, along which two riders in red doublets ap-

proach; in the distance blue hills under a deep brown sky—such is the landscape of Lodewyck de Vadder. Jacques d' Artois found in a park near Brussels imposing, pretentious sceneries; and Lucas van Uden painted ponds full of moss and luxuriant meadows upon which fat cattle reposed. The two Huysmans painted Italian landscapes in warm, glowing colours, and Jan Peeters, the marine painter, likewise followed the programme of Rubens by painting the sea in moments of dramatic disturbance.

Animal and still-life painting is represented by Frans Snyders, Jan Fyt Paul de Vos, Pieter and Adriaen van Utrecht. Like Rubens they paint animal pieces in which lions, tigers, stags, and wolves struggle in wild snorting passion. In their still-life they heap up dead game, fruit, fish, lobsters and oysters, pheasants and turkeys into mighty decorative pieces. As in the pictures of animals Flemish pleasure in action and passion is expressed, so in the representation of such succulent morsels, their love of pleasure appears. Like true epicureans they delight in the appearance of edibles, and their mouths water when in their pictures they heap up breakfast delicacies. Even the flowers which entwine the voluptuous Baroque vases of Daniel Seghers seem to smother in their overflowing fulness of life.

The entire Flemish art resembles a full-blooded body distended by powerful nourishment. All depict a creation which is healthy to the point of bursting and



which foams over in comfortable corpulency. Rich garlands of flowers and gleaming fabrics, nude human bodies and wild animals, saints, geniuses, and bacchantes are boldly wound into gay and sensual bouquets. Van Dyck, the Benjamin of the school of Rubens, was the first to tread a different path.

### III. Van Dyck

After the Spaniards had painted the Immaculate Conception and Rubens had celebrated sensual joy, the next stage had to be painting of the sadness which, according to the proverb, follows sensual joy. The flaming, quivering passion of Rubens was followed by the elegiac sadness of van Dyck.

Moon and sun—such is the position of the two in Flemish art: Rubens the radiant, gleaming, all fructifying orb; van Dyck the planet which, softly gleaming but not fructifying, pursues its quiet path. Beside the wild dramatist Rubens, he seems a singer of the world's woe; beside the powerful, fruitful master an over-refined, weary *roué*. A soft touch of tender enervated sensuality characterises both his being and his art. If Rubens is the king, van Dyck is the knave of hearts in Flemish art.

He was descended from a family which belonged neither to the aristocracy nor to the people. His father, a dainty, spruce little gentleman, was a dealer in silks, who waited upon his distinguished customers with a very winning smile. His mother, a tender, pale

woman, was celebrated for her artistic embroideries and is said, just before Antonis was born, to have embroidered the story of Susanna and the elders. This notice of his youthful surroundings is not unimportant; for before his pictures one thinks of the dull gleam of silken fabrics. It is easy to imagine how fond the lad was of passing his time in the shop, with what beaming eyes he looked up when a perfumed lady swept in, and how daintily he blushed when another nodded to him with friendly smile—and we may be sure that they all nodded. Refined, pale, of girlish delicacy, with blond locks and great dark eyes, with glance now ecstatic, now melancholy—he was the type that the ladies love. They all knew him, and he received many a tender glance when, clad like a prince, with white feathers on his hat, he sauntered through the streets of Antwerp. He had a right at a later period to depict himself as Rinaldo conquering the sorceress Armida by his beauty; the right to paint himself as Paris, hesitating as to which of the three goddesses he should award the apple of beauty. The choice was not an easy one for him at whose feet they all lay.

Even in the atelier of Rubens he took an especial position: not indeed that of Achilles among the daughters of Lycomedes (as might be imagined from this theme of one of his earlier pictures), but a maiden lost among wild boys. He preferred gallant chats with *Helène* to association with these crude daubers.

At the fêtes which Rubens gave, he was admired as an infant prodigy when, with his sweet voice, he sang Italian songs to the accompaniment of the 'cello. Later at Rome the contrast with his Flemish associates became even sharper. The raw fellows sat in their tavern in the Piazza di Spagna and got drunk; but though all of his countrymen came, van Dyck remained away. He preferred the more refined and elegant life of aristocratic circles. There was no festival to which he was not invited; no carnival in which he did not charm the ladies. He never went out without a following of servants, or forgot to wear his golden chains and new gloves. No wonder then that he was known as *il pittore cavalleresco*, the cavalier painter, among these Flemish bears.

Painters who do not harmonise with other painters are more comfortable in cities where no artists reside. The cavalier therefore left Rome for Genoa, where there were no Flemings to laugh at him, and no Italian painters to mock him; but women, beautiful women, and cavaliers, weary young marquises. An air of withered *décadence* hovered over the city, which had once been so mighty, and with song and pleasure awaited its end. It was just because they saw the collapse coming that they sipped so eagerly the cup of life, with feverish, hasty draughts; and van Dyck stood upon the soil where he belonged.

He found a similar stage of activity when at the close of his life he migrated from Flanders to England. Here

also was the sultry air preceding the storm, the soft, sensual atmosphere which lies over the earth before a hurricane descends. The old "merry England" was in its last throes. A young king who loved art and women, a beautiful queen and delicate royal children; and in the background a scaffold and the dark gloomy figure of Cromwell, the man of the people. His studio was the meeting-place of the distinguished world. But although hardly thirty years old, he is no longer the bold coxcomb, the fastidious Paris of former days; for the "god of time clips the wings of Cupid." He painted this subject in that picture of the Marlborough collection which sounds like a melancholy elegy upon earthly mutability, upon his own fate. He therefore awards the apple and finds a compensation for his lost youth in his new aristocratic splendour. For Mary Ruthven, his wife, is the granddaughter of an earl, and the son of the Antwerp silk-mercator is now a knight and belongs to court circles. True, the fire burns but feebly, the power of love is gone. Life has lost its sunshine for him, the favourite of women, and at the age of forty-two he closes his eyes.

His portraits of himself are a supplement to the course of his life. They occur in nearly all of the galleries, and beside those of other Flemings they create the impression that a man of a different race had lost his way among these crude, healthy people. Pale and tender, as if his pleasures extended far into the night, is the colour of his face; his lips tell of many

kisses; white and aristocratic is the hand with the rosy well kept nails, and his hair is dishevelled as if the hands of women had passed through it. Van Dyck knew that he was handsome; he knew the charm exercised by a sentimental singer, when by way of a change he assumed the attitude of one weary of the world. He coquettes even with his decline.

His art has a corresponding effect. Van Dyck has indeed painted pictures, like the *Crown of Thorns* and the *Two Johns* of the Berlin Gallery, which seem works of Rubens: except that the gigantic, herculean impression which he endeavours to attain seems rather affectation than actual power. As soon as he had progressed sufficiently to dispense with the forms and qualities of Rubens, he pursued his own paths, substituting delicacy for power, and attuning his picture to a minor instead of a major key. With Rubens we hear the clear fanfares of a gleaming, joyful red; with van Dyck the soft tones of the violoncello, harmonious and subdued; a red that is never scarlet, but a deep carmine, and which seems softened by the funeral veil. With Rubens there are two motives: flesh and strife; with van Dyck delicate bodies and gentle suffering. No man complains loudly, for a noise is plebeian; no one makes violent gestures, for only elegant poses are allowed in the *salon*. He never paints peasants, wild kirmesses, broad laughter, or shouting; for everything crude and coarse is abhorrent to him. To such an extent did women dominate his life that his pictures seem love-letters to

VAN DYCK



JAMES STUART, DUKE OF RICHMOND AND LENOX  
*Metropolitan Museum, N. Y.*



beautiful women or recollections of love's happy hours.

The antique is distasteful to him, because Rubens transformed it into a domain of rude bacchic sensualism. He only painted a *Danae*—love without brutal contact—and a *Diana Surprised by Endymion*; as if some indelicate intruder had appeared at an inopportune moment in the handsome painter's studio.

From the Old Testament he selected, like Rubens, the scene of *Susanna's Bath*. In Rubens's version a corpulent woman sits before us—a blue-eyed, fair-skinned Fleming; sparkling red and gleaming white are the prevailing notes of the colour scheme. Van Dyck painted a lithe, black-haired Italian, whose dark southern beauty gleams like gold from a deep brown landscape. While with Rubens a gigantic athlete springs over the wall to overpower the woman; in van Dyck's picture both gentlemen are careful to preserve good form. One tenderly strokes her arm, while the other looks ardently into her eye and vows his love by Cupid.

From the New Testament and the legends of the saints, Rubens painted scenes which gave him the opportunity to display flesh, passion, and worldly splendour. For van Dyck mystic marriages stand in the foreground; and whether the subject is Rosalia, Herman Joseph, or Katherine, the theme is that platonic love which, by avoiding everything crude, wins the heart all the more surely. Or he paints himself in the likeness of his patron saint, Anthony, to



whom the Madonna appears; or preferably as Sebastian because the negligée of this saint is so interesting. His pale body, bathed daily in essences, is covered only by a white cloth. Beautiful women, while observing Sebastian, gaze in reality upon van Dyck to meet the warm, sensuous glance which, even when dying, he casts upon them. The days of flirtation were indeed followed by others of weariness. As Musset then wrote world-weary poems, so van Dyck is in such moments very sorrowful and distressed. He paints Christ, alone under a gloomy, nocturnal sky, with a quiet sigh giving up the ghost. No brutal executioners torture him, as in the pictures of Rubens. He dies resignedly, a martyr to love; and they who have slain, bewail him. Again and again he painted the *Bewailing of Christ*—lovely women bending in sorrowful pain over the body of a beautiful man. The ancient and sacred subjects of the Christian religion are for him leaves from the diary of his own life. Here he is coquettish, there sorrowful; but he always plays only with his own erotic and sentimental emotions.

His portraits are like his biblical pictures. He was the born painter of the aristocracy. It is true that as a portrait-painter his talent is limited. He is helpless in the presence of abrupt and self-willed characters. Although it was the time of the Thirty Years' War, there is nothing military about his men. They wear no leather collars or jackboots, but black satin and silk stockings; and are at home not upon the battle-field

but only upon smooth parquetry. He was more adapted to be a painter of beautiful women than an interpreter of rugged manhood. To these pictures he could impart the entire tenderness and delicacy of his soul. Of exquisite taste are the black, mild white, or mild blue fabrics which he chooses for their toilettes; their movements are genteel and indifferent. To all the heads he imparts a subtle charm by the significant language of the eye, by a discreet smile or a dreamy melancholy expression. With fine perception for the eternal feminine, he understood how to read the hearts of women and perceived their wishes and secrets. Here a touch of life's happiness spoiled, there a soft sensuality or languid weariness plays about the lips. He also succeeded admirably with the timid delicacy of aristocratic children and the genteel indifference of young noblemen, because in such subjects he painted his own aristocratic nature.

Often it even appears as if in his effort to appear distinguished he introduced affected, dandified traits into the aristocratic world. At the time of the Renaissance, when the new states were in process of formation, there were few social differences. All were equal who by their own ability had risen above the common herd, whether they were princes, poets, painters, or scholars. Now the separation of the classes had been accomplished, and the nobility of the intellect was no longer upon the same plane as nobility of birth. In the courts of Europe it was found tactless when the

Regent Isabella entrusted Rubens, "a painter," with diplomatic missions. Van Dyck is proud to have entered these aristocratic circles. In contrast to Titian, whose eyelashes did not quiver when the Emperor Charles V. picked up his brush, he considered it a great honor when King Charles I. dined at his table. The vanity with which he himself played the *grand seigneur* he imparted to others. As he himself coquetted with his velvet cloak, his golden chain, and his well-kept, consumptive hands, so must all of his noble sitters do. The self-evident distinction of an earlier day is replaced by an intentional distinction.

Or is this sharp variegation of the aristocratic connected with the fact that van Dyck painted at Genoa and in England? The parallel with Velasquez, the black knight of mediæval Spain, presents itself. The princes whom he painted did not need to impress others by fine poses and select costume. They did not know that other than silken clothes existed, or that any other handkerchiefs excepting those of Brussels lace were used. They did not need to show that they were blue-blooded, because they were not acquainted with any other world. Van Dyck's subjects have already been startled out of their aristocratic repose. Genoa was near its end, and in England threatening storm-clouds were gathering. When Holbein was there Henry VIII. had caused a "Dance of Death" to be performed; now the people came to make their king dance. Charles I. appreciated this. How-

ever enterprising he appears upon van Dyck's portrait, his beard curled upwards, one hand coquettishly propped upon the hip, the other holding a walking-stick, and with an indifferent, mocking expression about his mouth, his glance nevertheless travels uncertainly into the distance, as if in unconscious foreboding of coming misfortune. All fear that the end of a long, beautiful day is approaching and the commoner is beginning to disturb their circles. Hence they are so cold and forbiddingly proud; therefore there plays about their lips a contemptuous *Odi profanum vulgus et arceo*: therefore they assume noble poses and show their blue blood as though it were a holy symbol. To the wild plebeian hordes which are storming upon them they oppose their whole enervated, aristocratic refinement, and they push back with white blue-veined hand the fists that grasp for the royal crown. Fated to die, they wish to die in beauty; a *bleu mourant* sentiment pervades their existence.

The long and beautiful day of the ancient aristocratic world—order approached its end, and van Dyck was its evening star. Wan and pale is the colour of his last pictures, as if soft moonlight were spread over them. In Holland the sun of a new day had arisen, the sun which to-day illumines the world.

## Chapter IV

### The Rise of Dutch Painting

#### 1. The First Portraitists

I N the midst of the aristocratic world of the seventeenth century, Holland arises like an island of burgherdom. What was dimly foreseen in England when van Dyck painted had already been accomplished here. After a long struggle Holland had become a republic; and immediately after the war a brilliant rise of the Dutch cities had begun. At a time when elsewhere the townsmen were poor, enslaved, and hungry, in Holland an almost premature *bourgeois* culture replaced the aristocratic. Clever merchants moved to Amsterdam and guided Dutch commerce into new paths. The surplus of popular power sought distant lands. Who would have thought in 1572 that a part of the Spanish Netherlands would become the possessors of a land like Java, would hold the Cape of Good Hope, and dominate the Asiatic trade? In the seventeenth century Holland had become the first commercial and sea power of the world.

If formerly art could only flourish where a splendid court, a pomp-loving church, or a refined aristocracy

afforded it protection and support, now in rich, republican Holland, for the first time, the *bourgeoisie*, with all its good and bad sides, became a power in the patronage of art; a change like that experienced by literature in the late middle age when the Minnesingers were followed by the Meistersingers. There was no call for the decoration of palaces, or for ecclesiastical, painting, the reason for whose existence had been destroyed by Calvinism. But the love of home had been awakened. Every family occupied its own house, and did homage, as wealth was not lacking, to the principle, "Adorn thy home." From an ecclesiastical, royal, noble art painting became an art for the home.

From this change further consequences resulted for the view of colour as well as for the subject-matter of painting. While the gay and brightly coloured Flemish paintings were intended for roomy, bright churches and splendid palaces, the Dutch were placed in narrow half-dark rooms, "where even the dear light of heaven breaks gloomily through painted glasses." In harmony with their destination for gloomy, brown-panelled rooms, lighted by little bullseye glasses, is the soft, rich light and shade of the pictures. With the Flemings grandeur, decorative movement, and conspicuous colours: here even in colour a sentimental and home-like quality. As to the subjects of Dutch paintings, scenes from everyday life and the landscape were all the more opportune because the Hollanders saw reality transfigured by poetic light. As they had for

long years been compelled to battle, they gratefully enjoyed the pleasures of life. Their own hearth was the world for them, indeed the very soil of their home was the creation of the inhabitants, who protected it by dykes against the ocean and had in bloody struggle torn it from the enemy. These conquests were celebrated in art. They did not think of transporting themselves into distant worlds of beauty, because what they saw about them seemed beautiful enough. They knew nothing of the myths and legends which were a recreation to the distinguished people of other lands; but they wished to see pictures of their own life and all the luxury with which they were able to surround themselves, treasuring art as a glorification of the happiness of home. One is interested in cattle, another in tulips and poultry, a third in the ships which bring his goods to port. One loves to hear a jolly farce, another finds that the view from his window upon the landscape is very beautiful. The subjects which dominate the *bourgeois* art of the present day were first depicted in this *bourgeois* land in the seventeenth century.

The movement began with portraiture; for it is natural that the rich burgher should begin his rôle of Mæcenas by perpetuating his own image. Through portraiture he finds the way to art. He wishes a counterfeit of his personality, and as photography has not been invented, he sits for his portrait. An incredible number of portraits was painted in the first

quarter of the seventeenth century. Every trade and profession is represented in the works of the Amsterdam Museum; the admiral and the merchant, the pastor and the professor, the counsellor and the ship-owner. The portraits of women are the pendants of those of the men. Occasionally the entire family, along with the servants, is united, the elder daughters with their husbands, the young children playing with their toys. These works already show that a new race of men had come upon the stage. Rubens and van Dyck, in their portraiture, seldom descended below a count; even when as an exception a burgher was presented, the picture is pervaded by a noble, courtly air. They love the rhythmic elegance of the toilette, and fair, round gestures; their hands are white and delicate; the man is more at home upon parquetry, the woman is not a mother of a family but a lady of the world. The dogs, indeed, but not the servants, are counted among the family; and the columnar architecture with the curtain completes the impression of pretentious magnificence.

A democratic atmosphere, on the other hand, envelops the soil of Holland. The third estate appears—men with raw, plebeian spirit, who are proud enough to wish to appear nothing higher.

“Ehrt den König seine Würde,  
Ehret sie der Hände Fleiss.”

Everything is simple, unpretentious, *bourgeois*, and moral. The men are angular, rugged, and self-con-



scious; the women jovial and honest. They have nothing of the cosmopolitan polish, the social routine of the Flemish noble ladies, and are not dazzled by the splendour of an elegant life. They sit before us dressed in plain costumes, their hair under a thick cap, the neck concealed under a stiff collar. They are accustomed, basket on arm, to do their own marketing, and themselves to wash their blue aprons or stiff ruffs. The hand, which with the Flemish women is long, slender, and aristocratic, is one accustomed to labour and to wield the broom. If they endeavour to appear elegant, their toilette is pathetically tasteless. Here and there, with the taste of a cook dressed up for Sunday, they display a bow, ruching, or ribbon; they hold a fan as if it were a kitchen utensil. The children, who are all princes with van Dyck, are here so awkward that they will only pose as models if the painter gives them an apple or a bunch of grapes.

These family portraits are supplemented by portrait groups of the corporations. The palace of other lands was replaced in Holland by the guild-house and the town-hall. The rising power of the guild life is likewise characteristic for the *bourgeois* trend of the time. The *élite* were replaced by the men of the hearth and the rule of the masses supplanted the oligarchy. At first the societies of marksmen played a similar rôle to the veterans' societies of the present day. Having during the long wars provided the fatherland with gallant defenders, they now rejoiced in amusing war-play.

FRANS HALS



BANQUET OF THE OFFICERS OF ST GEORGE'S GUILD

*Harlem Gallery*



Every society had its guild-house and exercising grounds, where once a year a solemn shooting match occurred. The victor was proclaimed with the sound of cannon; then there was a banquet at which the winner was presented the prize offered by the city, usually a golden cup. The posts of captain, officers, and standard-bearer were assumed by rich young men who delighted to wear uniforms; and, because they were fond of being painted in this uniform, such group pictures formed an important part of Dutch painting. Every member paid his dues and was therefore perpetuated by a master's hand.

But there were also guilds for more serious purposes. The love of charity and interest in the care of the poor and sick which had been awakened during the years of war still existed when these had passed. In all cities of the land hospitals for the sick and asylums for orphans, old men, and women were founded. It was the pride of the burgher to belong to the governing board of such institutions of charity, and to be handed down to posterity in such a capacity.

The craft guilds also experienced a new prosperity. The guild of the clothiers, especially, was an important industry which contributed much to the prosperity of trade. Like the military corporations, these industrial chambers had pictures of the masters of the guild painted for the guild-house. The submission of their accounts is always the moment chosen. At a table men are seated; those who review accounts, control the

treasury fund, and announce that, in their conduct of affairs, everything is done in accordance with the regulations.

Even the learned corporations, especially the physicians', gave occupation to the painters. Precisely at that period, in the century of the great war, surgery became an important science. In Leyden, as in Delft and Amsterdam, dissections were publicly conducted in the great hall called the *theatrum anatomicum*. The nearest benches were intended for colleagues of the professors and the invited guests, the middle for the students, and the rear for the public. In the middle of the amphitheatre was a table with the corpse, where the professor, surrounded by his assistants, performed the dissection. And as in Holland everybody had his portrait painted, portrait groups were also donated for this anatomical lecture-room, representing the professor in the midst of his assistants demonstrating upon a corpse or skeleton.

The oldest portraits of military societies date as early as 1530, and are in the style of the present photographs of soldiers of the reserve. No artistic effect, but resemblance alone is the object desired. As all paid the same dues, each one demanded the same consideration, and wished to be seen in full face and have both hands in the picture. These works are therefore no portrait groups but juxtaposed single portraits. If the number of subjects is too great for one row, they are arranged in several rows, one above another, so that

the upper faces look through the spaces between and above the lower row. This phase of portraiture is represented in the Amsterdam Museum by the works of Dirk Jacobs, Cornelis Teunissen, and Dirk Barents. The following generation, the treasuries of whose societies were in a position to pay higher prices, was not content with such simple portraits. Instead of busts they demanded three-quarter pieces or full-lengths, which necessitated the placing of figures in action and assigning some uniform motive to what had formerly been a mere juxtaposition of heads. This motive the painters at first found in representing the archers marching forth and at a later period in portraying them at a common banquet. The group of 1588 by Cornelis Ketel represents the culmination of this new development, and the seventeenth century then completed what the sixteenth had begun.

In 1618 Cornelis van der Voort painted the picture of the regents of the Amsterdam Hospital for Old Men, and before this his soldiers with the lances—those iron, unbending men who fought the Spaniards at Breda. In 1624 Werner van Valckert painted his two principal works, the four male and the four female regents of the Hospital for Lepers. Nicolas Elias Pickenoy, who was softer and tamer, understood the treatment of coloured costumes in a manner befitting the drawing-room, and was therefore especially prized as a painter of female portraits. Aert Pietersen, the son of the still-life painter Pieter Aertsen, painted,

in 1603, the first group of surgeons, the *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Sebastian Egbert*. To this same Dr. Egbert is dedicated the earliest work of Thomas de Keyser, who afterwards practised forty-five years in Amsterdam.

Not only in the capital but in all the smaller towns, portrait painters found work in abundance. In The Hague the rugged and powerful Jan van Ravestyn painted old swashbucklers with cuirass and sash, who had been in the field and preserved a warlike taste all their lives. In Delft the court painter of the house of Orange, Michel Mierevelt, developed an extensive activity, in a somewhat sober and manufactured style, and dashed off not only the Stadtholders, William I., Maurice, and Frederick Henry, but also the scholars of the land. In Dordrecht resided the ancestor of the Cuyp family, Jacob Gerrits Cuyp, a very busy painter, while in Utrecht Paulus Moreelse and Willem van Honhorst executed numerous commissions.

More than all of these cities, Haarlem had suffered in the war with Spain. After having fallen into possession of the foe in a desolate condition, and having been later destroyed by conflagration, it now became the most joyous of all Dutch cities. The painter of the Haarlemites therefore, is particularly the painter of young Holland. One thinks not only of rugged burgherdom and democratic self-confidence but of assertive bravery and lively animation, when the name of Frans Hals is mentioned.

## 11. Frans Hals

Think of a people enslaved and oppressed for decades; compelled to witness the restoration of Catholic monasteries in its land and the proclamation of laws of mediæval severity; a people which had, in a bloody struggle, thrown off the foreign yoke and achieved political and religious freedom. A bold and fiery generation grew up, conceived during the thunder of cannons in the battle and reaching manhood at the time of victory and fame. For such a generation the air they breathe has something exhilarating. They fear neither hell nor devil, but move about with clashing sabres and challenging glances. Their life is passed in revel and riot, in knightly war-play, at the banquet amid the clink of glasses. Bayonets flash and the rattle of the drum sounds. Should the Spaniards ever again come, these men, like their fathers, will be found at their posts.

Frans Hals was a true son of this sword-clattering, mad, rollicking Holland. Even in advanced years he felt like a *Corpsstudent*, joyous and light-hearted, youthful and bold; an anti-philistine who would have considered the word *bourgeois* as an insult.<sup>1</sup> One can imagine him in a state of exhilaration strolling through the streets at night, breaking windows and

<sup>1</sup>For the benefit of the general reader it may be advisable to state that the *Corps* is the oldest of the varieties of student organisations wearing colours as insignia and devoted, among other purposes, to conviviality and fighting duels; and that the term philistine is applied by them to all who are not students.—ED.



beating the night-watchman or in lieu of the night-watchman, his own wife. When this poor creature went to a better land, without ever keeping the year of mourning, he married Lisbeth Reyniers, with whom he is seated in the celebrated picture of the Louvre. Both are no longer young and have experienced many storms. Hals may have cracked many a joke during his work, and often called his wedded wife "old girl." Jovial and indifferent to fate, as if he himself perceived the comic side of his married life, he looks down from his portrait. Yet he never deserted good Lisbeth; for she was no spoiler of fun, never gave curtain lectures, but could herself raise the wine-glass. It almost seems as if the refrain of the old drinking-song,

"Altes Herz, was glühest du so,"

were inscribed, half ironically, under the picture.

This portrait of himself acquaints one with the remaining works of Frans Hals. As he himself remained all his life a gay student, so he made his Haarlemites gay students, casting such bold glances and moving about as briskly as if they were always on the point of jostling some philistine. Their life is passed between the *Mensur* and the *Kommers*.

"O selig, O selig, ein Fuchs noch zu sein!"<sup>1</sup>

His three earliest works in the museum of Haarlem

<sup>1</sup>The *Mensur* is the rather harmless duel practised by German students; the *Kommers* a convivial celebration consisting principally in singing and drinking. A *Fuchs* is a student during the first year of his membership of a *Corps* or other society; his characteristics are supposed to resemble those of the American college freshman —Ed.

are archers' banquets, and it is no accident that Hals, the joyful genius of the *Kneipe*, invented this type of picture. A fresh love of pleasure and rugged health laughs from all the faces. These are the men who themselves had taken part in the defence of Haarlem, and now merrily enjoyed what they had accomplished; men who had smelt powder, had seen blood flow and passed the night on the field of battle. In a later work, the *Archers of the Guild of St. Adriaen* are united under the trees of their garden, armed cap-a-pie and prepared for the march. In the picture of 1639 representing the *Departure of the Guild of St. George*, he uses the motive of the staircase to bring new life into the accustomed arrangement into rows. The colours are bold, fresh, and joyous: red sashes and bright blue banners, the rich still-life of fruits and lobsters, and the silvery light streaming through the treetops.

In his smaller portraits also, boldness, joy in life, and self-confident alacrity flash from every eye. If he paints children they do not weep or look serious, neither are they bashful and awkward. However small they are, they do not fear their elders, but look boldly and laughingly into their eyes. Even the nurse is full of a consciousness that her baby will become a field marshal or a Maid of Orléans. And these types of men! Here a little hunchback feels as brave as if he had just slain the giant Goliath; there a clergyman swings his book in a warlike manner, as if he wished to bring it down upon the heads of the Catholics; there again, a young

man with his knees crossed cracks his whip as if in challenge. In another picture of the Liechtenstein Collection (Vienna) there stands a young man, van Huythuysen by name, with his hat on one side, one hand upon his hip, the other playing with his sword hilt—as indescribably swaggering as if he had just declared war upon the united states of Europe. This is one of those portraits which reflect the spirit of an age. No scholar but a painter, Frans Hals, is the historian of Dutch liberty. If one thinks of the portraits of Velasquez, one feels what different worlds these two artists represent. There the refined distinction of the ancient Spanish nobility; people who seem quite apathetic, because others do not exist for them; here a defiant assertion of the commoner, the almost ludicrous vanity of the Dutch, who considered themselves the first people, the acme of the civilised world; who, confident of the morrow and proud of themselves, their intelligence and their ability, their fencing and their uniforms, paced about with clanking swords. Velasquez's people are distinguished gentlemen who can indeed wield the sword, but never have the opportunity of drawing it, because every one else is for them a pariah; those of Frans Hals cannot rest until they have scars of which to boast. In van Huythuysen he has painted the soul of the epoch and the soul of himself, the splendid *Corpsstudent* of art.

What his portraits do not say is related in his genre pieces. In them everything is united in which the

FRANS HALS

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PORTRAIT OF AN UNKNOWN MAN  
*Metropolitan Museum, N. Y.*



artist himself took pleasure—laughing, singing, music and drinking, exuberant sturdiness and bold abandon. The honeymoon of young Holland was celebrated in drinking and sensuality. Here a coarse bearded fellow, his cap awry upon his bald head, jestingly holds a girl in his lap, there the grinning Junker Ramp holds a goblet. There follow those delightful improvisations of light and characteristic portrait painting: the *Young Musician* in Amsterdam; the *Boys making Music* in Cassel; the *Drinking and Flute Playing Boys* at Schwerin. Then figures of the tavern and the streets: joyous toppers and laughing girls, half-drunken fiddlers and old sailors' wives; *Hille Bobbe*, the witch of Haarlem, with the owl upon her shoulder and the pewter mug in her hand.<sup>1</sup>

In works of this sort Hals has achieved his highest in the representation of instantaneous expression. A sudden laugh distorting the face, a keen glance, a bold gesture—everything he seizes in its flight. All gradations of laughter, from a pleasant smile to a hoarse roar, are depicted with the directness of the instantaneous photograph. This telegraphic style is his language, and in order to catch the flitting expression, he has created a technique in which every line is pulsating life. He wields the brush as if it were a sabre, and treats the canvas as if he stood opposite to the enemy upon whom he was showering blows. Two

<sup>1</sup> Professor Muther refers to the example in Berlin, of which there is a replica, with slight variations, in the Metropolitan Museum of New York —ED.

hundred years before Manet he founded Impressionism.

It is true that he lived eighty years and more—too long; for while he remained the same the world changed. The joyful time of riot and revelry gradually passed away. Holland had attained its desires, the soldiers of freedom of a former day, in their gallant, knightly costume, had become old and thoughtful. Bowed under the burden of years they still held meetings, but now for quiet counsel, no longer for a joyful banquet or a bold march. Even their clothing was changed; they no longer wore red sashes and glittering armour but solemn dark clothes; they were no longer marksmen and joyous feasters, but dignified patricians of rigid Calvinistic spirit.

These changed conditions are reflected in Hals's later works. In place of the joyful gaudiness which he formerly loved, an almost monochrome tone prevails in his portrait (1641) of the *Regents of the Hospital of St. Elizabeth*. A dark green table cover, a grey wall upon which a white spot resembles a map in black bevelled frame, and in front old people in dark costume—such is the content of the picture, which, in its serious characterisation and refined beauty of tone, reveals the boon companion of former days as a quiet, clarified master.

But it does not appear that his art still corresponded with the taste of the day. His free, student-like nature was no longer suited to the more settled views. He was warned in court to “abstain from drunkenness

and similar excesses." Commissions were no longer forthcoming, and the sheriff's officer appeared in his house. In 1661 he was declared exempt from taxes on the ground that he had no possessions. Later, when he had passed his eightieth year, the city fathers roused themselves and decided to grant him a life pension of two hundred gulden.

In this noteworthy year, 1664, when free Holland provided so royally for one of its greatest artists, Hals's last works originated. He who began as a gallant cavalier with soldiers' banquets now painted the regents, both male and female, of the hospital for old men of which he had himself become an inmate. And how they appear! The consciousness of carrying a hussar's sabre is no longer his. Contemptuously he dashed the mighty spots of colour upon the canvas. Anxiously and timidly the old maids and the worthy gentlemen gaze upon us, as if provoked and angry over the dirty, slashed garments and the brown linen in which the aged master has vested them. Bartholomæus van der Helst knew how to make velvet and satin gleam and cloaks flutter, and painted the gentlemen elegant and the ladies beautiful; Abraham van den Tempel, who imparted to them the aristocratic dignity of the Flemings, clothed them in black silk and white satin and let them wander upon park terraces amidst imposing colonnades; such artists had already become the ideals of those *bourgeois* who wished to play the rôle of barons.



In 1666 the aged master Hals filled a pauper's grave. Nine years later his name is again mentioned: when jolly Lisbeth, his wife, received a weekly allowance of fourteen sous in addition to her pauper's pension. The life of Frans Hals thus reflects the history of Dutch painting; beginning proudly and boldly but ending in sadness. A single artist whose life lasted eighty years saw how democracy was succeeded by comfortable philistinism, and philistinism by an apish imitation of courtly manners.

### **III. The Contemporaries of Hals**

Hals is the centre about which the art of the first half of the seventeenth century is grouped. As he painted portraits and genre pictures, and in his portrait-groups also depicted still-life, his influence extended in all directions, and he became the model of portrait, genre, and still-life painters.

Jan Verspronck and Jan de Bray painted military groups which, in their fine grey tone and vivid animation, resemble those of their master. Such subjects continued to be popular among the successors of Hals; for the Dutch burgher, seated in his comfortable room, was proud of his services as a soldier, of the marches and dangers which he had experienced and loved to relate to his children. In the gazettes he read of the things which were occurring in unhappy Germany; and straggling marauders still wandered through Holland itself. After having his portrait painted, the

burgher extended his patronage of art to recollections of his soldier days. Bivouac scenes, quarterings, and plunderings were the first subjects selected; then the occupation of gallant officers out of service, consoling themselves with charming girls over wine, with gambling and love for the hardships of military life. Dirk Hals, Frans's younger brother, Pieter Codde, Jan Olis, Jacob Duck, and Antony Palamedes are representative of the group. "The old soldier sits at the window, empties his glass, and blesses peace and peaceful times."

Others progress from pictures of soldiers to scenes from popular life. The "third estate," which had now become dominant, pointed proudly to the fact that beneath it there was yet a "fourth estate." As in courtly France the plebeian manners of Monsieur Dimanche and Monsieur Jourdain furnished the aristocrats with cause for laughter, so in Holland the burgher laughed over the uncouth conduct of the common people. Tavern life and tobacco play a special rôle in these pictures; for the pipe was as modern in 1600 as the bicycle was with us twenty years ago, and beer taverns were first customary in Holland. In the paintings of Jan Molenaer one sees such figures of drinking comrades and singing couples, pretty, feminine, pleasing pictures, in which the soft light of the candle is daintily interpreted.

Although a Fleming by birth, the adventurous Adriaen Brouwer likewise belongs to this group. After

his flight from his father's house he took service with the Dutch. With them he defended Breda against the Spaniards, and he appeared with a Dutch troupe of players at Amsterdam and Haarlem. Even in Spanish Antwerp he acted so much the Hollander that he was thrown into prison. His paintings also, in their homely coarseness and simplicity, belong more to the Dutch than to Flemish art. In the smoke of obscure taverns, over beer and strong drink, he wandered about among drunken plebeians. Boors throwing dice and playing cards, quarrelling, stabbing each other, and the next morning having their thick heads bandaged by the village barber—such is the content of his pictures. It is certainly a one-sided, almost disgusting theme; but his colouristic charm is so great that one quite forgets the content and only admires the brilliancy of execution. Brouwer possessed a native genius for painting. There is nothing reflective, nothing laboured in his work; each stroke of the brush suits just where he placed it. It is related that when he could not pay for a drinking-bout, he would rapidly design a sketch upon paper in the tavern, and send it to the art dealer. Most of his pictures seem to have originated this way; for he never considers the technical finish. Each one of them preserves the outlines of a sketch, and for this reason his works are a delight for every artistic eye.

In landscape painting there were at the beginning of the seventeenth century two opposing tendencies. Cornelis Poelenburg, Dirk van der Lisse, Bartholomæus

Breenberg, and Moses van Uytenbroek relate to Dutch burghers how things looked in fair Italy; painting small landscapes in the environs of Rome and Tivoli, peopled with shepherds and satyrs, with goddesses and bathing nymphs. Everything is executed with calligraphic elegance, and with a pleasing though superficial charm. But while in these little pictures that "arcadian" landscape painting whose chief representative had been Albani passed away, others began to paint the scenes of their native soil, which they well knew how to treasure, because it had been bought with blood. Italian scenes were replaced by Dutch environs: a flat country with high sand-dunes and distant perspective. The nymphs and goddesses were changed into peasants, fishermen, drivers, wood-cutters, hunters, and sailors. The earlier of these landscape painters—Hans Bol, Hendrik Averkamp, Adriaen van de Venne, and Esaias van de Velde—could not dispense with broad narrative; for something interesting had to happen in the pictures, if they were to receive the applause of the *bourgeoisie*. Popular sports upon the ice—at that time recently introduced,—sleigh-riding, markets, and hunts are the usual subjects of these works. Then the artist began to dispense more and more with figures and emancipate himself from the demands of the purchasers. The way across the fields to the woods, the slope of a sand-dune; a village amidst trees and shrubbery animated by peasants and waggons, by a troop of riders or marauders; the flat country with church towers and windmills—

such subjects recur in the works of Pieter de Molyn and Hercules Seghers. Jan Porcellis took up his quarters on the coast and observed the sea in its grey colour and monotonous beat of waves with quiet, true Dutch objectivity. Thus was the soil prepared for the great landscape and marine painters of the following epoch.

The walls of dining rooms were decorated with still-life paintings: these too a glorification of the luxury which the opulent burgher now enjoyed with thankful pleasure. Formerly, when Holland was a province, he was satisfied with herring, beer, and bread; now he can afford Rhine wine and oysters.

Among these painters, Pieter Claesz, Heda, and Frans Hals the younger depicted silver goblets, dishes, and gleaming plates with ham, oysters, and peaches in very refined harmonies. Their works reflect the joyful satisfaction of a burgher in his possession of a good wine-cellar and fine table-utensils.

Only the still-life pictures painted in the old university city of Leyden have a different character. In such a worldly age, so devoted to intense enjoyment, these masters alone thought of the change of earthly things. The pleasure of the table was not painted by Pieter Potter, the father of the celebrated Paul; but skulls, prayer-books, hour-glasses, crucifixes, fragile glasses and clay pipes, and slowly dying candles—such things as formerly St. Jerome had gazed upon when, brooding over the changefulness of earthly things, he arranged them in groups with the inscription *Vanitas*

beneath. The pictures remind us that the Dutch of the seventeenth century were not only merchants but also theologians.

They had suffered for their belief in the days when Alba raged in the Netherlands; and they are fond of being represented in their portraits with the Bible in their hands. Proud of the political freedom which they had won, they are even prouder of the Reformed church, which in 1572 arose from fire and blood. Their state was founded upon the model of the republic of Geneva. The special city of the theologians was Leyden, where the most prominent scholars of the land assembled and did for Holland what a century earlier Luther and Melanchthon had done for Germany. The States' Bible, completed nine years later, became the palladium of the new church, and was soon spread abroad in a million copies. In this book, which founded the modern Dutch language, the people found a new inspiration in the charm of holy legends, and became absorbed in the poesy of Old and New Testament narratives. The Old Testament, especially, acquired a significance which it had never before possessed in the Christian church; for the Dutch believed that a similarity existed between the fate of the people of Israel and their own, and regarded the prophecies of the Old Testament as wonderful promises for themselves. They identified Palestine and the Babylonish captivity with Holland and the Spanish domination.

From this feeling of kinship with the Israelites the

philo-Semitic sentiment which at that time passed over Holland is best explained. It was the first place in which the Jews found a home. Even in the beginning of the seventeenth century there were at Amsterdam four hundred Jewish families, most of them from Portugal. Soon afterwards the complete emancipation came. Some of the Jews, like Ephraim Bonus, became prominent physicians, while others stood at the head of the great transmarine projects.

Dutch poetry also has a biblical and Israelitic trend. Not only has Marnix, the poet of the wars of liberation, the effect of the Psalmist; Camphuysen's *Edifying Songs* resembles an Israelitic songbook, Vondel and Daniel Heinsius introduced Old Testament dramas upon the stage. In his musical setting of David's psalms, Huygens hopes "only to obtain immortality if he can reveal in his own works something of the beauty and power of the King of Israel." The preachers, in discussing contemporary events, refer to Old Testament parables in the pulpit.

By this means a new and wide domain was opened to art also. Although there were no saints to glorify and no churches would endure altar-pieces, the artists possessed the Bible, into which they might penetrate with their whole souls. As the Dutch considered themselves the representatives of the Israelites, the old legends suddenly appeared in a new light. Pieter Lastmann was not strong enough to lift the treasure out of its hiding-place; his works are crude, dry,

vulgar. and heavy: but—he was the teacher of Rembrandt.

#### IV. Rembrandt

A picture by Rembrandt in the Dresden Gallery represents *Sampson putting Riddles to the Philistines*; and Rembrandt's entire activity, a riddle to the philistines of his time, has remained puzzling until the present day. He has been called the master of light and shade; but this is not significant, since many others, Correggio, for example, attempted the solution of the same problems. He has been praised as the creator of the religious art of the Germanic North, which is equally meaningless, as Dürer has the same right to this fame. Although all the aids of science have been set in motion, he can neither be apprehended nor explained. As no other man bore his name, so the artist, too, is something unique, mocks every historical analysis, and remains what he was, a puzzling, intangible Hamlet nature—Rembrandt. The clearness and measure of the Hellenic spirit which dominated the Renaissance finds a contrast in the gloom of sentiment in Rembrandt's works. He has the same relation to the masters of the Renaissance as Ossian to Homer, and beside the Olympians he seems a Nibelung, a hero from cloudland.

It is perhaps possible to approach Rembrandt only if one resolves to interpret his pictures not as paintings but as psychological documents; for this is his most



individual characteristic. However important the few commissions which he received (like the *Anatomy Lesson*, the *Night Watch*, and the *Staalmeesters*) they did not make him what he was. He is only Rembrandt when he holds aloof from the public, as is the case in most of his paintings. He was the first artist who, in the modern sense, did not execute commissions, but expressed his own thoughts. The emotions which moved his innermost being were the only things which he expressed upon the canvas. He does not seem to think that any one is listening to him, but only speaks with himself; he is anxious, not to be understood by others, but only to express his moods and feelings. No painter, but a human being speaks to us. What he created and how he created it can only be understood by regarding his works as a commentary upon his life.

He was born in 1607 in the old university city of Leyden, where Bogermann just at that time began his great work of the translation of the Bible. His father was a miller, his mother the daughter of a baker, and he himself was the fifth of six children. His youth was spent in a serious and religious atmosphere. His mother, in particular, must have been an honest and pious woman; in her son's numerous portraits she holds in her lap the Bible, her favourite work. It is pleasing to think of the lad sitting at his mother's feet and listening to the old legends, or wandering about alone in the open field; for his father's house was at the end of the city just where the two arms of the Rhine

REMBRANDT



PORTRAIT OF SASKIA  
*Dresden Gallery*



unite, and even farther out stood the famous windmill. He probably wandered for hours along the Rhine; saw the ships with their coloured sails, the sand-dunes in their melancholy brown, the fresh green pastures where in philosophic calm the cattle reposed; gazed upon the grey sea with its boundless horizon and upon the heavens with the ever-changing passage of the clouds. A foreboding of the infinity of the universe was even then revealed to him.

At first he was uncertain as to his profession, and was enrolled as a student in the university; then he studied with Swanenburch, and later with Lastmann at Amsterdam. But after only six months he returned to his father's house and began anew with painting. His earliest pictures are attractive only in so far as they reveal the early technical progress of a great master. He carefully posed his model, about whom he then arranged into a complete still-life the contents of his atelier: pigskin folios, damascened knives, pieces of armour, and swords. In his studies of light and shade he followed the problems which had been popular in Dutch paintings since Honthorst. In the Stuttgart and the Nuremberg pictures representing an old apostle, probably Paul, in prison, the sunlight falls upon the head of the aged man. In his *Money Changer* of the Berlin Gallery he attempted a night piece: an old Jewish banker examining a coin by candle light, as in the *Money Changer* of Quentin Massys. The thought of the changefulness of this world and the joy in it

is probably the basic idea of this picture. If professional models could not be obtained he made shift with his relatives, whom also he bedecked with the garments to be found in his atelier. In a picture at Amsterdam, his father, the worthy miller, wears an iron armour and a cap with a high feather, and has turned his moustache martially upwards. It was the time when all Holland stood under the spell of the warrior's profession: such is the best explanation for this preference for military bearing.

At the same time he familiarised himself with the technique of etching. Just at that time, during the great war, beggars from all Europe wandered over the roads of Holland. Rembrandt drew them as he saw them; hunchbacks, lame, blind, and drunkards. He was especially fond of drawing himself in the most different costume and with ever-varied expression. Here he is thoughtful, there he rolls his eyes; here he starts back in terror, there smiles broadly, and there again his lips are contracted in pain. It seems as if he were seeking his own personality, which was a riddle to himself. But no less remarkable than the difference in his own portraits is his versatility as an artist.

His activity at Leyden closed in 1631, with a *Holy Family* and a *Presentation in the Temple*. His first attempt at life-size figures is the Munich picture from sacred history, depicted in the manner of Honthorst, as occurring in a Dutch home. Carpenter's tools hang upon the wall, and both Joseph and Mary wear

the workaday clothes of 1630. In a painting at The Hague, a great, wide church opens to view; it would seem that, after having painted people in narrow cells, his father's house had become too small, and the universe was revealed to his sight. This picture is at the same time the first instance of the struggle of light and shade, as if in foreboding that his life also would be shaped into a similar struggle. In his picture of himself in 1631 he stands bold as a conqueror, his hand braced upon his side; and, although a book-plate, his etching of the *Ship* (Bartsch 111<sup>1</sup>), may signify the reckoning between past and future. One sees the head of Jesus, a nude woman forms the mast. So he, encircled by enticing phantoms, sailed into the sea of life.

When he came to Amsterdam woman was at first the centre of all his thoughts. With the joy of a student coming from the constraint of the paternal roof into a strange university city, he yielded to the new impressions. A whole series of feminine studies arose, partly sheets of such coarse sensuality that they are usually preserved as "secret" in the cabinets of engravings. But soon studies of different character arose, like *Le lit français*, expressing a distaste for the sexual. Rembrandt's life was a constant struggle between these two natures; the desire of the sensual man to plunge into the world, and the disgust of the dreamer who did not find there what he sought.

<sup>1</sup> This reference is to the number of the etchings in Adam Bartsch's catalogue of the master's engravings: *Catalogue raisonné des œuvres de Rembrandt* (Vienna, 1797).—Ed.

He was otherwise occupied in fulfilling, in a serious and objective manner, the commissions for portraits which he received. If he had formerly clothed his relatives in armour, helmets, and strange fabrics, he now confines himself strictly to contemporary Dutch costume. As de Keyser had done before him, he depicted it in its monotonous seriousness, its dark colours, and its symmetrical cut. Only in the introduction of action into the portraits, does he occasionally depart from the traditional, as in the portrait of the ship-builder receiving a letter from his wife. By this innovation alone his first portrait group, the *Anatomy Lesson of Dr. Tulp*, is distinguished from earlier works. Even Mierevelt and de Keyser had in their pictures of surgeons not thought of unifying the scene, but had submitted to the wish of the sitters in placing the chief emphasis upon individual resemblance. No one looks at the professor or the corpse, but all are occupied with themselves or the observer. For Rembrandt the individual is only a part of the work of art. All take part in the event, of which the strongly lighted corpse forms the centre: Tulp demonstrates, and the other surgeons attentively follow his lecture.

His preference for gay and fantastic costume could only be gratified in his portraits of himself. In one he wears a storm-hood adorned with a feather or in another a black velvet cap and a moustache trained boldly upwards, in a third a velvet mantle with armour and a golden chain. When Dürer painted his Madrid

portrait with the gay coat and feathered cap he was like Rembrandt also in 1632, a suitor. In a portrait of the dispersed Haro collection there appears for the first time a youthful female head with fine delicate complexion, blue eyes, and light blond hair; Saskia van Uylenburgh makes her appearance in Rembrandt's art. Her cousin, the art dealer Hendrik van Uylenburgh, had ordered a portrait of his cousin from Rembrandt. They saw and loved. After the completion of the portrait she continued to visit his studio, and the next portraits at Stockholm and the Liechtenstein Gallery are no longer commissions. The sober Dutch costume is replaced by splendid, fantastic clothing. In the former she wears the red, gold-embroidered velvet mantle which Rembrandt had brought from Leyden; in another he painted her as her chaperone was arranging her long golden hair. In the bust portrait of the Dresden Gallery she laughs from under a red velvet hat; in that of Cassel she shows the fine lines of her profile; in the St. Petersburg picture she is costumed as a Jewish bride adorned with pearls and flowers and holding a shepherd's staff in her hand.

In fact, all the pictures of these years are connected with Rembrandt's betrothal. The sudden, seemingly illogical appearance of quite different subjects is only to be explained by the fact that all of Rembrandt's works symbolise personal moods. It was so strange that he, the son of the miller of Leyden, should have won this refined daughter of a patrician, almost against



the will of her relatives; he therefore paints himself as a prince of the nether world abducting Proserpina. It was so strange that this dainty little doll loved him, the awkward, coarse-grained giant; the figure of Samson therefore arises in his mind. When Saskia's guardian was opposed to the engagement, Rembrandt recalled the biblical scene in which Samson wishes to visit his wife and finds the house locked. "I verily thought that thou hadst utterly hated her; therefore I gave her to thy companion," the old man calls down, while Rembrandt as Samson threatens with his clenched fist. When at last in June, 1634, the wedding was celebrated, it gave occasion for the picture *Samson's Wedding*: Saskia, dainty and serene, sitting like a princess in the circle of her relatives; he himself appearing as a crude plebeian, whose strange jokes frighten more than they amuse the distinguished company.

After he had so long followed public taste, it now amused him to shock the *bourgeoisie*; he felt himself at odds with the whole world when he painted *Samson Destroying the Temple of the Philistines*. The early years of his marriage were spent in joy and revelry. Surrounded by calculating business men who kept a tight grasp on their money bags, he assumed the rôle of an artist scattering money with a free hand; surrounded by small townsmen most proper in demeanour, he revealed himself as the bold lansquenet, frightening them by his cavalier manners. He brought together all

manner of oriental arms, ancient fabrics, and gleaming jewelry; and his house became one of the sights of Amsterdam. Like the princess of a fable, Saskia, decked with gold and diamonds, strutted about, so that her relatives thoughtfully shook their heads. In a picture in Buckingham Palace he paints her examining gleaming earrings before the mirror, while he places a collar about her neck. In the picture of the Dresden Gallery he sits as a cavalier at table, a sword at his side and a velvet cap with curled ostrich feather upon his head. Like a giant playing with a doll, he holds dainty Saskia upon his lap, and smilingly raises his glass of wine. This is no artless pleasure, but Samson throwing down the gauntlet to the Philistines; a giant stretching his mighty limbs in preparation for a struggle with all existing views.

At the close of his life he once painted a picture of himself grinning at an antique bust. He probably felt a similar feeling in painting the *Abduction of Ganymede*, that jolly farce which shocked the educated Hollanders as much as Böcklin's *Bath of Susanna* shocked cultured Germans. At that time Rembrandt experienced his artistic "years of indiscretion." One need not assume that he wished to imitate Rubens. The first years after his marriage were the times when he let himself loose as a man and as an artist; for thus may be best explained the coarse affectation of force and the wild impetuosity of his works during this period. The cycle of the *Passion of Christ* which he began in 1633 for the Stadtholder

Frederick Henry—a commission, which cannot therefore be considered a psychological document—is the principal example of this phase of his style. Arms gesticulate, faces are contorted, and the costumes are puffed in Baroque rhythm. Even as a colourist he speaks *fortissimo*: he could not depict the splendour of the sky blinding enough or the raging of the elements wild enough.

Gradually he became more serene, more serious. The world which he wished to shock became indifferent to him. Even his marriage had brought gloom as well as sunshine. In 1635 when Saskia became a mother, he drew the jubilant, light-flooded etching of the *Annunciation to the Shepherds*; now, when his first child died, he commenced the picture of *Abraham Offering Isaac*. His home, in the Breestraat in the midst of the Jewish quarter, became his world. The fantastic Orient, the great and ancient culture which the Jews had brought over from the Moorish middle ages into prosaic Holland, attracted him. The artistic figures of the Ghetto moved about under his window: grey-bearded men with high turbans, veiled women in gleaming fabrics. With many of them, as with Ephraim Bonus and the Rabbi Manasseh ben Israel, he was on friendly terms. The son of youthful Holland, which as yet had no traditions or artificial forms of life, felt himself attracted by these bearers of a culture many thousands of years old. He stood isolated among his countrymen, like a foreigner whose language they

did not understand; an orator who preached to ears as deaf as those which heard Christ on the Mount; a seer among the blind, like Tobias whose eyes were opened by the mercy of heaven. Among the people of the Ghetto he found appreciation for his lonely art. His house also was a piece of the Orient on occidental soil. Smyrna carpets and Arabian curtains, burnouses and caftans, fragments of architecture with polychromatic Moorish columns filled his studio. By means of portières and gleaming glass windows he created gloomy corners, through which a dreamy light vibrated in mysterious harmonies. As his aim had formerly been *bravura*, passionate emotion, large size, and harsh colour, his eye now finds repose in the mild gleam of velvet, the warm splendour of silk, and the sparkling shimmer of gold and precious stones. Of tropical and luxuriant landscapes, of costumes and people he built a fairy architecture of exotic splendour; in the midst of a prosaic world he created a poetic one of his own. A romanticist, he dreamt himself far away from the grey of every-day life in a distant and enchanted world.

The beauty of the female body was also revealed to him in its gleaming splendour. If at the beginning only coarse models had been at his disposal, he could now glorify the beautiful body of Saskia. Stretched out gracefully and voluptuously upon a white couch, she is called *Danaë* in the dainty nude of the Hermitage. In the picture of The Hague Museum he shows her as

*Susanna* The light illumines the little face with pale splendour, caresses the shoulders, and plays upon the body in white, golden reflection. As little as in the first instance Rembrandt thought of the antique, did he here think of the Bible.

Since he had discovered this gleaming wonder-world of light, he felt no inclination to fulfil commissions for sober portraits. In the Dresden portrait he stands with a guinea-hen in his hand, and the light, falling fully upon the plumage of the feathers, presents a bouquet of grey, brown, yellow, and red tones, in which it shines, gleams, sparkles, and glitters. Henceforth all portrait heads are for him such studies of light effects, a playground for rays of light. The *Lady* of Buckingham Palace is encircled by soft, golden light, and her toilette, in its select elegance, is one determined not by the sitter but by the painter himself. He would hardly have painted the portrait of the preacher Ansloo if the contrast between the dark red tablecloth with the light grey background and the black clothes had not yielded such refined colour harmonies. His celebrated *Night Watch* of 1642, representing the departure of the standard-bearer Frans Banning-Cock, is more of a fairy picture than a portrait group of archers. From a gloomy courtyard they step out into blinding sunlight. How this different light is painted, which encircles the figures, here sunny, there gloomy; with what master hand Rembrandt runs through the entire range of his colours, from the lightest yellow through all shades

of light and dark red to the gloomiest black—this has often been pointed out and justly celebrated.

But one can also understand that the soldiers who gave him the commissions to paint their portraits for the guild-house were little satisfied with the manner in which he conceived their commissions. Not only is the composition which he arranged, for pictorial reasons, contrary to military discipline; positive, sober, and clear-headed, the Hollanders were incapable of appreciating his treatment of light and shade. Accustomed to the dry objectivity of de Keyser, they missed resemblance in these heads emerging from the gloom. No military guild ever thought of applying to Rembrandt again; for other artists were more compliant with the wishes of their patrons. The allegory numbered "Bartsch 110" perhaps gives expression to Rembrandt's feeling over his loss of popularity. The fashionable painter has fallen; but the artist Rembrandt arises, and, free from all fetters, he may now preach the gospel of a new art.

Unfortunately he lost something far more important than the favour of the public in the year—Saskia. A short time before she had presented him with a boy, and Rembrandt had during this time of hope painted the *Meeting of Mary with Elizabeth* and the *Sacrifice of Manoah*, in which Manoah and his wife kneel thankfully before the sacrificial fire while the angel who has announced the birth of Samson rises in the air. Now he was alone in his house in the Breestraat, where

everything reminded him of the years of his happiness; alone with the lad, to whom the sufferer had given birth shortly before her death. In a drawing showing himself nursing a little child with a milk bottle he ridicules himself as a widower. If even before this his relation to the outer world had been dissolved, his art now become wholly that of a lonely man who only seizes the brush to express the thoughts of his soul.

Before this, Dutch nature had said nothing to him. For the only suitable background to the glittering pictures of the Orient was that tropical splendour which he painted in his *Susanna* at The Hague or the *Magdalen* in Buckingham Palace. Even the *Storm* in the Brunswick Museum, his first landscape, conducts us into a land of dreams. Black clouds pass over the sky, and a dazzling light falls upon the walls of a city and upon trees quivering in the storm; torrents rage and jagged cliffs tower aloft. His loneliness after the death of Saskia drove him out into nature; into that solitary Dutch landscape where the washerwomen labour, and the mills flap their wings. With a beating heart, and perhaps as astonished as when formerly he wandered along the banks of the Rhine at Leyden, he stood in the presence of the great Mother and learnt how to feel her breath even where it but softly sighs. In his sketch-book he seizes upon the simplest, poorest things: the canals with their bridges and bordering houses in his walks through the streets of Amsterdam; if he wanders farther, fallen huts, hay-stacks, and

REMBRANDT



THE SACRIFICE OF NOAH

*Dresden Gallery*





peasant houses. Here he is charmed by a silhouette of trees, there by a windmill rising upon a lonely hill. A bit of pasture or a path losing itself in a field is sufficient to attract him. His wanderings did not extend far; the quiet environs of Amsterdam, Sloten, Kronenburg, and Zaandam, were his farthest excursions. Nor did he need to seek for motives or majestic lines; for something much finer, the poetry of the plain, had been revealed to him. In some of his etchings one has the feeling of wandering lonely and self-absorbed over a great plain. However small they are, they seem pervaded by the infinity of space. By these drawings Rembrandt advanced beyond the centuries and became the father of "intimate" landscape painting. In them he is the greatest space composer of all times; for a simple suggestive line suffices to make the eye measure infinity.

In his other works the memory of Saskia at first prevailed. For a long time he lived with her in spirit, and as in the Berlin picture he painted her a year after her death, so his other pictures are pages from the book of memory dedicated to his wife who died so young. It is no accident that just at that time he etched the *Death of Mary*; that just now, when he himself had no domestic happiness, he painted again and again the *Holy Family*, or *Mary with the Child* approached by the shepherds in timid adoration. With the *Good Samaritan* he thought of the hours when he himself sat at Saskia's deathbed. The introduction of the

supernatural into the material world occupied his thoughts; that dream life with its forebodings and visions; eyes which open again after they have seen death; the secrets of the realm of shadows which the risen Lazarus or Christ could reveal. He represents Jesus appearing as a spirit to the disciples at Emmaus, and shows Him calling Lazarus from the grave. But Christ seems to him not only a worker of miracles; He is also the loving comforter. Once he had painted the *Sermon on the Mount*: about the Saviour a crowd busy with its own affairs and hearing nothing of His words, and in the foreground a dog, symbolising the thoughts of the masses. Now all who are troubled or heavily laden press about the Blessed One, and He eases their pain, comforts and teaches them, and points to the better world beyond. He is no longer a demigod, but the plain carpenter's son of Nazareth, who speaks simply to the simple.

Precisely because Rembrandt's paintings were never ecclesiastical commissions but the "outpourings of the heart," he has shown, more than all religious painters, what a treasure of poetry, tenderness, kindness, and love slumber in the ancient legends. The purpose of Catholic religious painting was to create general types of Christianity. God must receive the faithful in His house with courtly splendour and with dazzling adornment. This pompous and proselytising element, so predominant in the work of Rubens, is as distant as possible from Rembrandt. Expressing his sentiment

only, he relates biblical stories as we imagined them when as children we sat at Christmas-time by grandmother's knee. Instead of the agitation of Rubens's works, with Rembrandt self-restraint prevails; instead of the oppressive ecstasy of the Spaniards, a soulful inwardness, something sad and suppressed. Although he uses no gestures and no dramatic actions, he nevertheless expresses the most delicate emotions of the soul. If Rubens's art is like a palace with a showy highly coloured façade, but without an interior where human suffering could find refuge, so Rembrandt's works are a *trésor des simples*. To this discreet trend of his art, which speaks only in whispers and makes faint suggestions, his attitude towards colour corresponds. In the older works when he was the warlike Samson, he loved sharp contrast of dark shadows and harsh light. In the later pictures which originated at the time of his brief and happy love, the air also glitters and gleams as if full of gold dust. Now a melancholy greenish tone prevails; a soft evening light whose mild rays daintily and softly quiver through the gloom.

A spirit like Rembrandt's was of course too complicated to express itself in a single direction only. Many other scenes chosen from Bible and legend show that woman still influenced his thoughts. He painted *Vertumnus Deluding Pomona*, *Christ Forgiving the Adulteress*, and a new version of *Susanna*, in which she is no longer alone, but the two old men in the background gaze with quivering desire upon the young

woman. As in his younger days, he again works after the feminine model. Often they are hideous women and in such cases Rembrandt renders everything deformed in the sense of severe modern realism. As formerly in his *Lit français*, it now sometimes seems as if he wished to conquer his passion for women by representing actuality in its disgusting ugliness.

His troubled soul at length found repose in the blandishments of his housekeeper Hendrikje Stoffels, at that time twenty-three years of age. He first painted her in the portrait which survives in the Louvre, bedecked like Saskia with pearls and jewelry. In a picture of the National Gallery (London) she sits clothed only in a chemise, placing her foot in the water; the evening sun casts its rays upon the legs, the chemise, and the blond hair. In the next picture the model has become his beloved, and is depicted as a modern Bathsheba receiving a letter from Rembrandt, her David.

From this time something reposeful pervades Rembrandt's works. As he was happy again and enjoyed domestic comfort, his melancholy as well as his desire for women had disappeared. A simple woman, kind and self-sacrificing, was the comrade of his life; she provided for the household and occupied herself with Titus, who had become a fine lad. In the picture of the Kann collection (Paris) he seems a little prince of the Northland, a dreamy Hamlet. She had also

brought into the house her mother and another relative, a wild boy from the country.

These years were the most fruitful in the activity of Rembrandt's life. After he had himself again found a home he etched those "intimate" portraits like that of Jan Six, in which the man and the home, the figure and its surroundings, are so skilfully interwoven. He was especially attracted by the peacefulness and quiet contemplation of the aged: that great repose which seems so serene, but in which the mighty stream of memory flows. The portrait of Hendrikje's venerable mother, with its mild and thoughtful expression, rises before us. In her he has painted the clarified, passionless repose which gradually became the prevailing characteristic of his being. In the etching of 1650 he has represented himself in no fantastic costume, but in an ordinary garb, his hat upon his head, standing at the window absorbed in thought. Such is the Rembrandt to whom Hendrikje gave a new summer and who awaited a beautiful and peaceful autumn. He held himself more and more aloof from society and seldom left his home: that paradise which he had created for himself, and where, far from the banality of every-day life, he lived as a lonely aristocrat of the spirit.

But in the meanwhile the civil authorities had discovered that such a life offended against the law. On the 23d of July, 1654, Hendrikje received a summons to appear before the consistory to answer to the charge

of leading an immoral life with Rembrandt the painter. Three times she was summoned but failed to appear. Not until the fourth warning did she "acknowledge her guilt and was severely punished therefor, warned to repent, and forbidden to partake of the Table of the Lord." This scene also, the accusation of Hendrikje by the neighbours before the authorities, was transformed in Rembrandt's mind into a biblical picture: the *Accusation of Joseph by Potiphar's Wife*. The Egyptian woman is common rumour, bringing the accusation with hypocritical indignation; Potiphar listening with severe judicial mien, the Reformed consistency; and poor Joseph, bashful, blushing like a girl, and casting down his eyes, is the good Hendrikje.

This was the prelude of the drama which now followed. Rembrandt, through whose hands thousands had passed, suddenly became penniless and loaded with debts. All his earned and inherited fortune had gone, and even the fortune of his son Titus, which he managed as a guardian, had disappeared. He had promised the dying Saskia to be a good father to Titus, and in memory of this hour painted himself as Esau tenderly holding young Jacob in his arms. Now he had forgotten the claim of his first-born. Little Cornelia, the daughter of Hendrikje, with her rosy, blond childish face, had brought new sunshine into the house. So he painted himself as Jacob blessing Ephraim, the younger, and forgetting Manasseh, the elder. Rembrandt brooded over his troubles, and this mood is reflected in

the picture of an architect at Cassel, in which an old man with white, beautifully lighted hair sits at his table covered with papers, lost in deep reflection. He endeavoured to raise new sums of money; but the loans which he wished to obtain were refused him. He himself was responsible for his fate, and the public of Amsterdam, which had already dropped him, could wash its hands in innocence. At this juncture he painted the picture of *Pilate Washing his Hands* in indifferent calm.

In response to the pressure of his creditors on the 26th of July, 1656, he was declared a bankrupt. He who had such a horror of all business matters had to negotiate with the bailiffs. Externally everything seemed indifferent to him. He even had the repose to etch the portraits of the two men appointed to conduct the bankrupt proceedings, the porter of the bankruptcy court, Haaring, and his son, the auctioneer. But to the same year also belongs the etching of *Christ Exposed to the Multitude*. When the public posters on street corners announced that the collection of the painter van Ryn would be sold at auction; when tailors and glove makers appeared in the quiet house of the Breestraat in order to examine the exhibition of his collections, there arose in Rembrandt's mind the picture of *Christ at the Pillory* surrounded by a mocking, plebeian throng. At the same time he etched the *Stoning of St. Stephen*, the protomartyr; with a thought of himself as one of the many great men whom the



ignorant world had since then stoned. Rembrandt, who wished to found a new religion in art, was, while he lingered in the realm of his thoughts, thus denied by his people. So he paints the *Denial of Peter* and Moses in wild anger breaking the tables of the law.

A rich shoemaker bought his house. He himself led a nomadic life until Hendrikje, associated with Titus, began an art shop in order to support the family by the sale of his etchings. In the Rosengracht, at the entrance of the Jewish quarter where Rembrandt had formerly lingered so much in the antiquaries' shops, lay the little house of which they took possession, and where his last works were created. For although he was robbed of his possessions; although he sat in a poor, bare attic room and his meal consisted of herring, cheese, and bread, Rembrandt struggled on. "I will not let thee go except thou bless me," are the words which Jacob spoke when he wrestled with the angel; and with this picture in the Berlin Gallery the last period of Rembrandt's artistic activity begins.

His power is unbroken, but the sentiment and the colour of the picture is different. He no longer paints the magic harmonies which flooded his house in the Breestraat, but the cold, sober daylight of little attic rooms—no longer gorgeous garments, but rags. Everything is attuned to gloomy brown and blackish-grey tones. His art is that of a poor man who has himself experienced Solomon's "All is vanity." In a picture of the Louvre (1660) he stands before the easel in an or-

dinary brown coat, with a white cap upon his head, his face unshaven, his skin withered, his hair grey, but with brush and palette in his hand still painting. To himself he must have seemed a Franciscan in his brown woollen cowl, and it is therefore no accident that one of his last etchings is dedicated to St. Francis, *il poverello*, who also had nothing of his own. With this brown woollen cloak which he himself wore, he also draped his models. He drew it over the mother of Hendrikje, who also has suffered much and has become even more wrinkled, more careworn, and kills time by paring her nails. He draped with it the old man whom he painted as *St. Matthew* listening breathlessly to the word of the angels, and over the tired pilgrim of the Weber Gallery. In the former painting the theme is inspiration which the human soul receives from heaven; in the latter, the fervour of the prayer which comes from the depths of the soul. But Christ especially, the great sufferer, the God of the lonely and suffering, again becomes the centre of thought to him whom fate had cast down; as in the picture of the dispersed Demidoff collection, the suffering, downcast man, with the mild, kindly eyes, and the *Ecce Homo* in Aschaffenburg—that phantom-like picture with the expression of a supernatural repose.

One more commission, although as a charity, was assigned to him. A former pupil, the marine painter, Jan van de Capelle, who as the possessor of a dye-shop was known to the members of the clothier's guild, ob-

tained for him the commission to portray that august body. Rembrandt, who in 1642 had transformed a sober group of soldiers into a fairy picture, fulfilled this task without thinking of experiments, just as it had been assigned him and as earlier artists had done before. But such commissions seem to have been followed by evil fortune. As in 1642, after the completion of the *Night Watch*, Saskia had died, so in 1664, after the completion of *De Stalmeesters* Hendrikje breathed her last. As if in foreboding that he would survive quite alone, he had drawn as early as 1659 the etching *Youth Surprised by Death*: a young woman and a young man, Hendrikje and Titus, in whose way a skeleton with an hour-glass steps. Now that Hendrikje was dead, his own end rapidly approached. His last pictures show in an awful manner the changes in him. His face is puffed, his cheeks are flabby, and his expression contorted by pain. The bandage about his cap indicates chronic headache, and the eyes, dimmed by drink, seem half blinded. Weyermann describes how he slept during the day and wandered about in the taverns at night: and the distinguished Chevalier Sandrart saw him wandering with expressionless eye among the second-hand stores of the poorer quarter.

His eyes will no longer permit him to etch; but the brush, or at least the mahlstock, he does not relinquish. He applies colours with a knife, paints reliefs. Thus originated the *Family Group* of the Brunswick Gallery

REMBRANDT



THE ARTIST AND HIS WIFE  
*Dresden Gallery*



(whomever it may represent), and a strange picture in the Amsterdam Museum, in which he the lonely man thinks of the aged Boaz, leading home a youthful bride. His last dated picture (1668) is the *Crucifixion of Christ* in the Darmstadt Gallery. While one soldier fastens the fetters upon the Redeemer another draws him up by a rope. "It is finished!" He died upon the 8th of October, 1669, Titus also having preceded him. An inventory established that excepting his artist's materials and woollen clothes, he left nothing behind him. His life was a tragedy of fate, the tragedy of the first modern artist, it has been called.



## Chapter V

### The End of Dutch Painting

#### 1. The Genre Painters

WITHIN the bounds of Dutch art, that of Rembrandt stands isolated. However much his pupils superficially resemble him, his works are the revelation of a genius, theirs are merely good oil paintings. It is related that Rembrandt in the beginning devoted much time to his teaching. Himself the most individual of all artists, he encouraged individuality in others, and had the atelier in which they laboured partitioned off, that no one might influence the others. But while he protected them from each other, he could not rescue them from the power of his own personality. Whatever was transferable, they adopted: fabrics, costumes, and the treatment of light. In the beginning, when he was the most admired painter of Holland, it was their highest pride to have their works taken for his; but later, when the favour of the masses turned from him, they trod more conservative paths, along the broad road of the easily comprehensible.

As early as 1630 Jan Livens and Willem de Poorter were inmates of his studio at Leyden. The former,

whose principal work is a *Sacrifice of Abraham* at Brunswick, is also known by his woodcuts, which were formerly ascribed to Rembrandt. De Poorter's *Solomon's Offering to False Gods* is derived from Rembrandt's *Simeon* of 1631. Jacob Adriaen Backer, one of the first to study under him at Amsterdam, became a portrait painter, and all his life remained true to Rembrandt's style of 1632. His portraits are powerful, simple, and objective works. Ferdinand Bol, who in his first paintings, (the *Flight into Egypt*, the *Angels at the Grave of Christ*, and *Tobias*) often adopted Rembrandt's figures, became later a tame and comprehensible gentleman, by which policy he won the favour of the public to the same extent that Rembrandt sacrificed it by his eccentricities. By means of beautiful types, gleaming columns, and majestic draperies he sought to create in his pictures the impression of distinction, which was missed in those of Rembrandt. From Rembrandt to van Dyck: such is the path traversed by Govaert Flinck: and as this Flemish, impressive tendency corresponded with the wishes of his sitters, he became the most popular portraitist of princely personages and corporations. Gerbrand van den Eeckhout remained truer to the principles of Rembrandt. Such pictures as the *Adulteress* of the Amsterdam Museum were influenced by Rembrandt not only in subject, but in treatment of light. Jan Victoors is drier and more prosaic; Solomon Koninck is in his pictures of hermits little more than a copyist.



At the beginning of the decade following 1650, on the other hand, several excellent masters issued from the school of Rembrandt. Women peeling vegetables, young girls standing dreamily at the window, old women at the spinning-wheel, carcasses of animals: such is the content of the quiet, delicate, and very modern pictures of Nicolas Maes. The light plays upon the red table-cloth, grey walls, and bluish white jugs. In pictures like his family scene with a little drummer boy, every chronological estimate is silent: they might be exhibited to-day and signed Christoph Bischoff. Not until later, after he had visited Antwerp, did he begin to give to his portraits something of a theatrical dignity. Carel Fabritius, who died at the age of thirty at the explosion of the Delft powder magazine, would, if he had lived longer, have probably become one of the most important masters of Holland. His few pictures belong to the pictorial miracles of the school. In all of them a man speaks who did not imitate Rembrandt, but followed independently the magic of light-movements and the charm of refined colour-effects. His *Starling* in The Hague Museum, especially, has as modern an effect as a study by Degas. The best landscape painter of the school is Philips Koninck, to whom Rembrandt had revealed the poetry of the wide plain. Covered by low shrubbery, the flat landscape stretches endlessly away; the air is clear and affords a view into the far distance. Another follower of Rembrandt was Jan van de Capelle a marine painter,

the most insinuating and subtle colourist of all of his class in Holland. While others had to paint pictures of the ships for their owners, Capelle, who was a rich man and only used the brush for his own pleasure, could place weight upon the purely artistic. He has interpreted the flitting play of light more delicately than the objective and prosaic Dutch painters otherwise do. Aart de Gelder had the courage to enter Rembrandt's studio in those years when Rembrandt had become the laughing stock of children. As de Poorter reflects the detailed, youthful style of the master, de Gelder shows that of the half-blind sufferer, who could only labour with mahlstock and palette-knife. Many pictures by him, like *Abraham with the Angels*, the *Ecce Homo* at Dresden, and *Boaz* in Berlin are of such powerful and broad technique that they were formerly considered works of the age of Rembrandt.

It is, by the way, only an echo of Rembrandt's spirit if his pupils occasionally paint biblical subjects. All other Dutchmen knew nothing of the dream life, but rested firmly and contentedly upon the earth, happy in their mediocrity: quiet settlers who tilled their little fields with diligence and intelligence.

In spite of its world-wide commerce Holland was at bottom a philistine little country. Even to-day, he who treads the halls of one of the old patrician houses of Amsterdam is amazed at the precise neatness, cleanliness, and order, and at the philistine *ennui* and

the self-satisfied comfort which reign there. All the copper utensils shine, and in the great chests which are carefully dusted every morning lies the substantial store of linen lasting for generations, which was the pride of our grandmothers. Along the walls, as correctly placed as soldiers, stand the chairs; and upon the panelling of the walls, arranged with equal regularity, are the faïences, the silver flagons and mugs. Above hang the pictures, small cabinet pieces, which are dusted with the same care as the furniture, and in their colour harmonise with the soft light of the rooms. Delft ware, very carefully executed line-engravings, and maps, reminding us of the world-wide possessions of a seafaring people, are also displayed. In the garden nearly everything is straight-lined, stiff, or laid out in circles: the trees as well as the sod; and in rectangular carefully tended flower-beds tulips and hyacinths grow. Even the façades of the houses gleam in snowy whiteness: for they are painted once or twice a year, thanks to the careful cleanliness which is a proverbial characteristic of the Hollanders. Everything in the country shows order and a sense for the practical: clean houses, as well as the well-trimmed rows of trees growing in faultless regularity about the quays. Even the landscape is divided by streams, canals, and the straight boundaries of fields as if in accordance with a mathematical design.

The art of Holland harmonises with the general character of the country. Even to-day its painting is

somewhat *bourgeois* and limited in its self-contented phlegm, inimicable to change. It possesses neither fantasy nor poetry. One breathes the soft, regular warmth of the great fragrant stoves, which stand in the wealthier Dutch houses. A contemplative contentedness and a comfortable provincialism characterise everything. The painters confine themselves to the representation of their home, the stately harbours of their ports, the quiet simplicity of their life, the heavy weight of their cattle, and the fertile soil of their fields. Strangers to all revolutions, to all impetuous boldness, they follow their thoughtful temperament and form a quiet nation in which no tumult sounds. Everything is tasteful and of an almost tiresome excellence. As they paint to-day, they painted two centuries ago, Every one has his small field which he tills unceasingly, and paints one picture which he repeats all his life.

Genre-painting, which in the beginning found its subjects only in scenes of soldiers' life, was greatly extended to include all life—progressed from soldiers to the portrayal of the peasantry, and then to the representation of city life.

It is difficult to acquire a taste for the peasant pictures of the seventeenth century. Since the days of Millet we have gained too serious a conception of the ethical importance of art and of man's labour to find pleasure in the puppet-show of the old Dutch masters. The mighty words, "I labour," which first gave to

peasant-painting its significance, had not penetrated their consciousness. Not one of all these painters dares to plunge into the depths of life. They make a mummery of peasant life, and let their heroes experience so much pleasure that the question of their sustenance is not even touched. No one seeks the people at labour, in the field, behind the plough and harrow, with the scythe, spade, or hoe. Drinking, revelry and the dance, quarrelling and cracking of skulls are the only themes. The romances of roguery which at that time appeared as a special branch of literature afford a parallel. The types also are strangely alike. It is not to be supposed that there were ever such stupid-looking peasants, such sawed-off, thick-nosed beings who vegetated in half-animal stupidity. It is likewise incredible that peasants appeared so charming and clean as they appear in other pictures; that they had such clean nails, and trod a measure with the daintiness of a cavalier, taking a dancing lesson. The latter made the peasant artistic by endowing him with the charms of the *salon*; the former by treating him as a fool over whose stupidity and coarseness the refined burghers could laugh.

The first path was taken by the Flemings. When David Teniers, inspired by the successes of the Dutch, began to paint peasant pictures, he chose the most dapper youths and prettiest girls; he idealised them and gave them a touch of distinction, and made the peasant popular as an artistic subject by paring his

nails and smoothing down his coarseness. All act like well-bred people; they dance, skip, and sing; but with decency and reserve. However extended the répertoire of his figures appears, they are in truth only changing marionettes, whose words are written down, whose gestures are prescribed, actors in peasant's garb, who never forget that the public before which they appear consists of very proper ladies and gentlemen.

Adriaen van Ostade, who stands at the opposite pole, tries to raise a laugh by the stupidity of the types, the drollness of their mien, and the comical situation. Boorishness and good-natured stupidity is his domain. Beginning with tavern quarrels and their rude scenes in the spirit of Brouwer, he later yields to Dutch phlegm, and substitutes contemplative peasant interiors for the debauches of an earlier period. The people no longer rage and quarrel, but eat, drink, and smoke in the tavern. A fiddler goes through the village, and by his music attracts the people to the window; or the family sits listening in an arbour before the house door. Although a reflective, peaceful, and idyllic tone pervades his last works, he cannot dispense with the cheap joke of distorting the heads into long-nosed caricatures.

His younger brother, Isaac van Ostade, who was particularly occupied with the traffic of horses and waggons, in front of rural taverns, is more serious and objective. Horsemen approach, the peasant-carts make a halt, horses are being shod, and beggars loiter about the road.

As he avoids constrained effects and approaches things as a simple observer, his pictures are more sympathetic to us than the others. We can no longer appreciate the vulgarity and cheap jokes of Cornelis Bega, Richard Brakenburgh, and Cornelis Dusart. Their "heartly humour" and vulgar clownishness no longer provoke laughter, and their paintings show that along these paths progress was no longer possible. To say nothing of the circumstance that the blunt tone which prevailed in the school of Frans Hals no longer found appreciation in the proper Holland of the decade following 1650, the trouble was that the painters discovered no new traits in peasant life. The stupid, coarse, and crude remained their circumscribed domain. As they saw in the peasant only the voracious, drunken, quarrelsome boor, the peasant picture of the seventeenth century degenerated into a hollow farce, and not until the nineteenth could it, borne by a new social and literary movement, be seriously revived.

Jan Steen, the Molière of Dutch painting, has at least done the service of having enlarged its subject-matter. In his portrait of himself he appears grinning with a tankard at his side. This hilarious trend, a boorish, Falstaffian humour pervades most of his works. The tavern is the place where as a man and a painter he is most at home. Peasants quarrel and throw mugs at each other's heads: a drunken man is dragged home by his comrades: a quack, in front of a tavern, offers his remedies, or an old scamp courts the waitress. But

ADRIAEN VAN OSTADE



THE OLD FIDDLER  
*Metropolitan Museum, N. Y.*





the jolly landlord of Leyden was not exclusively a painter of tavern humour. He also paints children's festivals and scenes of the toilette, serenades and weddings in which acute, mischievous, and witty traits replace crude clumsiness. At times he has even a didactic and moralising air, and he swings a satiric scourge almost like Hogarth. *As it was won, so it is spent; As the old sang, so the young pipe; What avails light and spectacles, if the owl does not wish to see; Here no medicine will help, she is love-sick*—such are the characteristic titles of the works in which he satisfied those who demanded artistic qualities in a picture, as well as those who wished to read amusing stories from it

A finer variety of genre-painting is that which, looking aside from all narrative and representation of character, places the weight upon artistic qualities exclusively. All of these painters were jesters and entertained the correct *mynheers* by narrating the dissipation and crude conduct of the people. Some did it in the form of crude drollery: others were quieter and more sedate. This drastic crudity was followed by the epigram, the farce by the novel. But the starting-point still remained the anecdote. The poetry of the simple and the charm of the purely pictorial had not yet been discovered: for the Dutch burghers appreciated the subject-matter rather than artistic qualities. The problem was to educate the burgher to art. So the clowns were followed by the painters. The

themes became indifferent—simple scenes from everyday life without action or episode—and the beauty of the painting lies in its purely technical qualities. There the people grin, gaze at the beholder, and play a comedy for him; here they are among themselves and do nothing interesting, but dream, read, write, make music, or amuse themselves. From the colour and treatment of light alone the sentiment is developed.

The conquest of the purely artistic was made easier by the circumstance that some painters came into contact with a more aristocratic culture. Gerhard Terborg, who stands at the head of this group, probably issued from the school of Frans Hals. A blackish-grey tone, resembling the scale preferred by Frans Hals in his later years, gives to his youthful works their individuality, in contrast to the light and shade of others. About his figures he arranged, as did also the masters of Hals's school, skulls, hour-glasses, and books into veritable still-life. Soon, however, other masters entered his horizon. A cavalier and an enterprising spirit, he went in 1635 to the court of Charles I. of England, where he was attracted by the female portraits of van Dyck, with their gleaming, milk-white satin robes. In 1648 he was present at the peace of Münster which he commemorated in the picture of the London National Gallery: and this residence at Münster had the further result that, at the suggestion of the Spanish ambassador, he tried his fortune in Madrid. Although Velasquez was at this time at

Rome, his paintings hung in the Alcazar, and the later works of Terborg show the deep impression which the spirit and the colour of Velasquez made upon him. Distinguished gentlemen of almost Spanish *grandeza* are presented in his portraits, as with Velasquez dressed in black, standing out in full figure from the pearl-grey wall. It is the Spanish court manner translated into the Dutch miniature style. Likewise in his genre-paintings he has adopted not only the yellow of the great Spaniard, but his much-admired pink, his mystic grey, and his deep black. He also preserves an aristocratic dignity and a cool reserve which distinguish him from the mass of crude Hollanders as a knightly, almost Spanish figure.

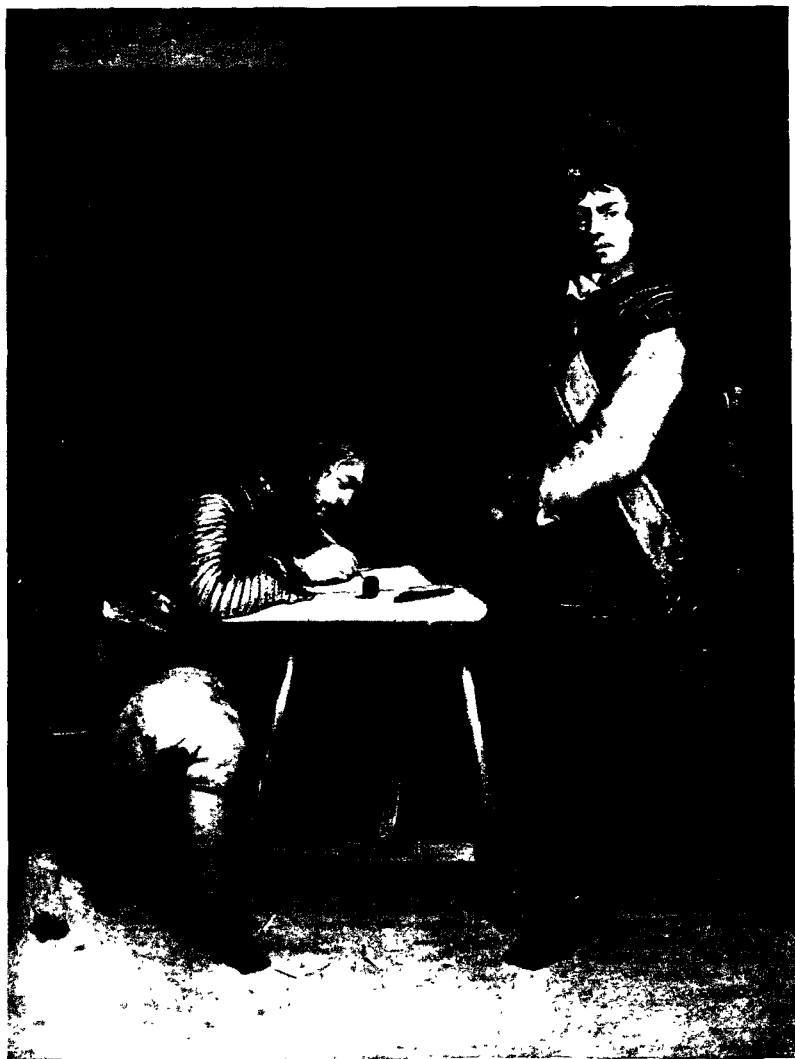
Although the days of war were past, Terborg remained the painter of soldiers, partly because the lieutenant had a sort of knightly halo for the Dutch burgher, partly because bright uniforms, swords, and plumed hats, contrasted with the white satin dresses and ermine-lined silk jackets of charming ladies, afforded possibilities of distinguished harmonies of colour. These demands of colour alone determined the content of his pictures. A dapper trumpeter as a love-messenger delivers a letter, awaits the answer, and presents the message to his master, or officers sit with ladies in gallant tête-à-tête. Even the celebrated picture which Goethe describes as *Fatherly Advice* shows in truth nothing but a man with a plumed hat, beside a lady in black and in front of a lady in

white. His paintings of still-life are usually arranged about silver cups, finely cut glasses, silver chandeliers, Delft porcelain, and the most costly products of foreign applied art which came to Holland by way of the colonies. If, instead of love, music forms the theme, the performers do not sing and fiddle as with Ostade and Steen; the scenes are laid exclusively in the *salon* and in select society. The lute, whose soft silvery sound suits well the silver tone of the paintings, is used either for solos or else in duets between ladies and gentlemen. Distinguished, cool, and placid are the proper epithets for all of his pictures.

One other painter alone has the same Spanish effect: Michel Sweerts, who is known by a single but very fine picture in the Munich Pinakothek. Four men are represented sitting in a tavern; yet one hardly observes the figures, but only the harmony of the black and whitish grey tones. In an etching known to be by his hand Sweerts calls himself *eques et pictor*, and it seems strange that we do not know more of this knightly painter.

As devoid of subject as Terborg's are Pieter de Hooch's pictures. A few people are gathered in a room in front of the house door, in a court, or in a garden; a woman reads a letter, sits sewing or rocking the cradle, gives alms to a beggar-boy, or arranges her little daughter's hair. What charms the master is chiefly the sunlight, which, like a stream of gold-dust, pours into the softly lighted rooms or gloomy courtyards. He is

GERARD TERBORG



OFFICER WRITING A LETTER

*Dresden Gallery*



especially fond of varying the effects of illumination by displaying a view through several rooms. In the foreground, perhaps, is a room into which the sun shines brightly, and through the open door one looks into another which is even more brightly illuminated, or perhaps pervaded by a soft twilight; or the eye falls upon a shady garden and the street beside it is flooded by warm sunlight. In his charming simplicity de Hooch is a very delicate master. Without thinking of praising the artist, one would like to sit in these cozy rooms, where the sunshine falls upon the floor and chests and the kettle hums softly over the glimmering fire.

He had two doubles who were formerly often confused with him: Esaias Boursse and Johannes Janssens. Their difference from de Hooch consists only in the circumstance that the people whom they paint are less well-to-do. His belong to the wealthy *bourgeoisie*, whose houses are paved with marble tiles, and contain heavy, handsome furniture. The rooms of the people whom Boursse and Janssens paint are poorer and barer. They are paved with red brick, and instead of the warm glowing tones of de Hooch, greenish-brown colours prevail.

Jan van der Meer is the master of the brightly flaring sunlight. His teacher, Carel Fabritius, the refined pupil of Rembrandt, had directed his attention to light-painting; but the problems which he attempted are quite different from those of de Hooch. The latter paints entire forms with full-length figures; and the



light pours through the door, bathing everything evenly in soft tones. Van der Meer, on the other hand, places the figures near the side of the picture and presents them in half-size, depicting only a part of the room. The light does not enter through a door but through a window at the side; and as the figures sit quite in the foreground they remain in the gloom, while the middle and the background flare in bright sunlight. The scale of colour is also different. Whereas de Hooch's pictures are attuned to a dark red, van der Meer loves a bright, misty blue and a delicate citron-yellow; a map with black bevelled frame is generally on the wall, upon whose fine pearl grey it forms a piquant white and black spot.

Nicolas Koedijk, Pieter van Slingeland, Quirin Brekelenkam, Jacob Ochtersveld, and Nicolas Verkolje should further be mentioned; and Gabriel Metsu includes them all. The themes of Terborg (ladies at the toilette, officers, trumpeters, and musical entertainments) alternate with the doctor's visits of Steen and with the fish and vegetable markets. Although Metsu's activity included but a few years, he illustrated the entire life of Holland, that of the people as well as of more distinguished circles.

### **11. The Landscape Painters**

Equally popular with genre pictures were animal subjects. The raising of cattle was an important pursuit in Holland, and even to-day the land

resembles a great farm-yard: a soft carpet of turf spreads over hill and dale; clover and vegetable fields, splendid meadows stretch out, and everywhere are pastures surrounded by hedges. Fat oxen and sheep, as white as though they had just been washed, lie upon the grass. At the head of these animal painters stands Paul Potter, who painted with Dutch objectivity the mighty brown masses of flesh and the slow, heavy tread of the cattle. They are essentially Dutch, for they know neither passions, nor struggles, nor movement, but chew the cud phlegmatically or lie down in comfortable repose. Round about the greenest of meadows extends, and above it is a mighty heaven, which shades imperceptibly into the sea. Adriaen van de Velde is more mobile and coquettish; he has less power and more grace. Instead of the bright green spring colours of Potter, a golden chiaroscuro pervades his works. The cattle, with Potter the principal theme, are with him only a part of the landscape.

Pictures of horses were painted during the first half of the century by Gerrit Bleeker; he was followed by Palamades, who painted cavalry conflicts of stormy movement, and by Pieter van Laar, a healthy and powerful master who found charming things to paint in the neighbourhood of Rome in front of the decaying smithies and taverns. The best known of this group is the graceful and elegant Philips Wouwerman. Soldiers having their horses shod; gypsies, and peasants going to market; ladies and gentlemen riding to a deer

or falcon hunt; distinguished companies of hunters at breakfast, or cavaliers in a riding-school—such is the content of his pictures. The execution is clever and distinguished. In order to attain an interesting spot of light colour, he usually places a white horse in the foreground. Poultry found its specialist in Melchior Hondekoeter, whose poultry yards, turkeys, peacocks, and ducks are to be seen in all galleries.

The landscape-painters progressed along the paths which Esaias van de Velde and Hercules Seghers had trod. As the popular style demanded such additions these earlier masters could hardly dispense with the appropriate figures in landscape—such as riders, fishermen, foot-passengers, and skaters. Now the figures disappear, and the landscape is raised to an independent artistic production. At the same time that Spinoza proclaimed his pantheism, landscape-painting achieved its earliest triumphs.

As regards colour the Dutch landscapes differ from their predecessors in that beauty of colour is superseded by beauty of tone: a peculiarity which is partially to be explained by the foggy atmosphere of Holland which subdues all colours, and partly by the reaction against the school of Brueghel. The highest aim of the Flemish masters had been fresh gaiety of colour. By introducing three tones, brown, green, and blue, for the fore-, middle-, and backgrounds, they changed nature into a shimmering, many-coloured stage, in the midst of which gaudy scenes gay little figures and

gleaming animals wander about. In the Dutch pictures, on the other hand, all contrasts of colour and indeed all pronounced colours are avoided. The bright green of the trees, as well as the blue of the sky and the colours of the figures, are all subordinated to a dark, usually brown, colour scheme. The conception of colour which had been developed in painting small interior pictures is determinative also for the landscape.

Jan van Goyen, the earliest of this group, is most at home on the coast of the Zuyder-Zee and the banks of the Maas. Rivers with lazy, rolling waves, with boats gliding silently to the sea, with fishers drawing their nets to the land are his usual themes. A moist and misty brown is his characteristic feature. Solomon Ruysdael uses brighter colours, especially in his foliage, which is not greyish brown but a yellowish green. Shining waters, in which his favourite tree, the willow, is reflected, occur most frequently in his pictures.

His nephew and pupil, Jacob Ruysdael, is rightfully considered the greatest Dutch landscape painter. A majestic "gallery" beauty which shows to advantage on parade is characteristic of all of his pictures. At the same time he is more versatile than the others, and has painted everything which his home offered: oaks a century old and hills covered with heather; ponds and stagnant water; deeply shaded woods in which herds graze; and wild waterfalls roaring through dark pines. Ruysdael's pictures, indeed, reflect the fortunes of his life. He belonged with Hals and Rembrandt to those

artists who were not understood by their time. He passed his last years lonely and careworn, and ended his life in a hospital. Of these gloomy experiences his pictures seem to tell us. He began quietly and peacefully, painting the sand-dunes in the environs of Amsterdam, tiled roofs, fields, shrubbery, and the wide plain reposing under a bright and silver grey sky. Then came the time of quiet, self-conscious power: great broad-topped oaks which defy every storm and raise their mighty branches to heaven. Then the struggle and the lost illusions are reflected in sceneries of destruction, a terrified nature and the devastation of the elements. Cold, black storm-clouds, through whose darkness livid lightning quivers, gather in the sky; streaming rain pours down upon the ruins of a church; waterfalls foam over rocks, from the lonely darkness of the forest, bearing cliffs and shivered pine trees along with them. Sometimes the storm shakes the crowns of bare, withered trees; the surging waves toss about little fisher-huts, and stones torn loose are shattered with a shrill noise upon the seashore. Finally came the time of loneliness, of melancholy resignation. He leads us into the darkness of the primeval wood; a white cover of snow lies like a funeral shroud over the earth; in gloomy brown the sky forms a vault over weather-beaten gravestones; a tired mountain brook seeks its way over broken tombstones.

As Meindert Hobbema also could not have subsisted as a painter, he accepted a position as tax gatherer.

JACOB VAN RUYSDAEL



THE WATERFALL  
*Dresden Gallery*



to protect himself from want. Modest in his requirements and content with little, he passed his life as a happy father of a family. His modesty, happiness, and contentment are reflected in his art. No surging waves and threatening clouds, no gloomy pines and melancholy ruins, but peasant's houses, mills, and quiet brooks and foliage. In idyllic peace, in sunny joyfulness the earth lies before us. He paints roads leading to quiet villages; sunny field-paths which are lost in the green; ponds where quacking ducks bathe and water-lilies raise their heads. Red-tiled roofs gleam through the trees, and in the quiet cool of the woods a mill paddles and rays of sunlight scurry through the foliage. In this regard also he differs from Ruysdael, that nature has with him something joyful and friendly. Ruysdael, the lonely man, painted solitude, graveyards, primeval forests, thick impenetrable underbrush. With Hobema rocking boats near the shore betray the presence of fishermen near by. The smoke ascending softly from peaceful huts relates of the people who live in them:

"In einem kühlen Grunde  
Da geht ein Mühlenrad,"

such is the sentiment of his idyllic and friendly art.

Of the other painters each preferred a landscape and an hour which appealed most distinctly to his sentiment. It is characteristically Dutch, the way in which they follow their quiet temperaments, always repeating, without need of change, the same things.



A sandy road and an old stump covered with ivy; a fallen tree-trunk near by, and on the other side a view of sandy hills: such is the ever-recurring content of the pictures of Jan Wynants. Aelbert Cuyp is the painter of the sky. The earth lies there like a brown mass of copper under a blazing red steel cupola. Whether he paints grazing cattle or camp scenes, the principal theme is not the landscape, but the mighty dome of heaven forming the crimson, gleaming vault above it. Van der Neer is celebrated as the painter of twilight and the night. He paints skaters enjoying themselves in the foggy winter afternoon on the ice; conflagrations quivering through the gloom of night; and oftener still the moonlight spreading itself in reddish-brown harmonies over lonely dunes. The eye of the Hollanders was so attuned to brown that even the moonlight did not appear to them in a silvery blue mist, but as golden light in deep, warm tones. Antonis Waterloo, master of the forest glades, and Jan Beerstraten, the master of the snow landscapes, might further be mentioned, without exhausting the list of Dutch landscape painters. The whole country seems to have been divided among the painters, every one of whom had his own plot which according to his abilities he tilled.

After having described Holland, they occupied themselves with foreign countries, and by the interest in the subject sought to give their paintings new power of attraction. Allart Everdingen, the painter of Norway, had, during his wanderings in the Scandi-

navian mountains, filled his sketch-books with the studies which he afterwards used at Haarlem and Amsterdam. His celebrity was due rather to the novelty of the subject than to artistic qualities. For at bottom he is a mere declaimer who speaks in strong hyperboles. Gloomy fir-trees stand upon abrupt and towering cliffs over which a torrent flows; or weather-beaten ruins tower upon pointed mountain tops. In endeavouring to make the wild landscape of Norway more powerful and effective than it really is, he crowded cliffs and waterfalls into impossible compositions. As he continued throughout his life to make use of the studies which he had made in his youth, his last pictures are only schematic repetitions.

Hermann Saftleven depicted the valley of the Rhine; and Frans Post made a voyage in 1637 to Brazil with Count Maurice of Nassau, painted South American landscapes with brown, half-naked people, white tents, palms, and tropical sunlight—pictures which might as well belong to the time of Bellermand and Eduard Hildebrandt as in the seventeenth century. But Italy in especial again became the promised land. Jan Both, Hermann Swanefeld, Nicolas Berchem, Hendrik Mommers, Karel Dujardin, Johannes Lingelbach, Jan Asselyn, Adam Pynaker, Jan Griffier, and many others began anew the pilgrimages to the South, and painted the solemn lines and glowing light of the Campagna. That the subject of their pictures was one of tiresome monotony can be explained, as in the case of Ever-

dingen, by the fact that the contents of their portfolios were soon exhausted. Roman peasants clothed with goatskin, peasant women riding astride of asses, shepherds, muleteers, brigands, and bagpipers, with an old Roman aqueduct, a broken marble column, a temple, or the fragment of a statue in the background; of such materials they constructed their landscapes, like mathematicians testing different combinations of a row of figures.

In addition to landscape, marine painting was equally popular, as might be expected from the important part which the sea played in Dutch life. Simon de Vlieger, Willem van de Velde, Reynier Nooms, Abraham Storck, and Ludolf Bakhuizen are the most celebrated names in this branch. Refined subtleties need not be expected in their works. They did not succeed in rendering the restlessness of the waves in motion, or the reflection of the water. In fact, they think far less of sentiment than of ships. Their aim is to satisfy the professional knowledge of the Amsterdam merchants, and they therefore regard the ship with the eye of a ship-owner, who examines whether every mast and every plank is properly placed, and the sea with the eye of a captain, who calculates whether a voyage will be successful.

Jacob Berckheyde and Emanuel de Witte painted the interiors of the whitewashed Reformed churches, with the light streaming through high glass windows and the worshippers filling the naves. Gerrit Berckheyde and

MEINDERT HOBBEEMA



AVENUE OF MIDDELIARNAIS  
*National Gallery, London*



Jan van der Heyden are the painters of Dutch streets lined with red brick houses, of quays, canals, and straight rows of trees. When the name Weenix is mentioned, a discrimination should be made between Jan Baptista Weenix the father, and Jan Weenix the son. The former lived four years in Italy, and painted pictures of the Campagna with shepherds and ancient ruins; the name of the latter is inseparable from the thought of a dead hare, about which, his favourite, animal, he arranges dead peacocks, swans, pheasants, partridges, ducks, hunting-knives, and guns. To the left a large vase or a reddish-brown curtain, to the right a view of a park, forms the background.

The number of "breakfast painters" is inexhaustible. Abraham Beijeren, who painted fruits, oysters, lobsters, and glasses; Marten Simon, the painter of partridges, Jacop Gillig of fishes, and Willem Kalf whose subjects were goblets, books, and shells, may be selected from the mass. As Holland was the land of flower-culture. flower painters like Jan and Cornelis de Heem, Jan Huysum, and Rachel Ruysch found abundant occupation. One pays more attention to the harmony of colours, another to botanical exactitude; a third impresses his patrons by painting insects upon the flowers in sufficiently detailed manner to be observed under a microscope. It is as difficult to make a selection among the Dutch painters as it is to characterise the individuals. They are united by a remarkable family resemblance and characterised by an artistic technique

which clothes the humblest object with pictorial charm.

### III. Court Atmosphere

It cannot however remain concealed that since 1650 Dutch artistic products became more extensive than intensive. Great and powerful masters are no longer active, and the few who did survive to a later time fared as did Hals and Rembrandt. Prudent painters sought some other means of support than painting. Goyen speculated with old pictures, with tulips and houses; Jan Steen, his stepson, was an inn-keeper; Hobbema was a collector of taxes, Pieter de Hooch a bailiff; Jan van de Capelle conducted a dye-shop, and Adriaen van de Velde was a linen draper. Others, like Ruysdael, ended in a hospital or stood upon the list of bankrupts; but it was just these who brought life, spirit, and motion into monotonous artistic activity.

After having been the refuge of freedom Holland became in course of years a land of shopkeepers. The rugged race of statesmen, naval heroes, and colony-founders died out, and a generation of rich bankers took their place, who impressed art also with the pedantic principles which formed the content of their philosophy of life. Just as correct as the lives of the *mynheers*, just as clear and free of dust as the Dutch rooms, the pictures must be. It pleased them to take a magnifying-glass in their hand and discover things

invisible to the naked eye. The result of such æsthetics was that soulless, smooth, and over-detailed painting which found its first representative in Gerhard Dou.

Dou was the pride of his nation, and the best-paid painter of his day. The accuracy of his brush-work impressed his contemporaries as much as the geniality of Hals provoked them. When the East India Company congratulated Charles II. upon his restoration to the English throne, they bought for a "Meissonier" price a picture by Dou as a present for him. One banker paid a thousand florins the year for the option of purchasing Dou's pictures. They are to be found in all museums and represent the most diverse subjects; but their philistine dryness is always the same. There are portraits in which every fold and wrinkle of the skin, every hair of the furs and cloaks, and every thread is copied in facsimile with microscopic exactitude, in the spirit not of the primitives, but of philistine pedantry. Then came those half-length figures in window alcoves, which were his particular hobby: such subjects as a smiling maiden, a lady making her toilette, a girl watering flowers, an old man smoking, or a wrinkled old lady sitting over her sewing. Round about he places the things in whose polished brightness Dutch housewives took delight: mugs, plates, glasses, pots, and kettles, not even forgetting the implements which effected this cleanliness: brooms, rags, and brushes. In the display of clothes every texture of the cloth can be clearly



recognised; and with the books he does not neglect to reproduce the print so exactly that it can be read with the aid of a magnifying-glass. Instead of a window, the framing is sometimes supplied by a cave in which hermits are seated; first, because such old men have many wrinkles to be painted, and then because the appropriate crucifixes, skulls, hour-glasses, and bundles of straw afford the opportunity of detailed miniature painting. In order to emphasise even more the detailed character of the execution, he sometimes seeks the assistance of candle-light. A maid with a lighted candle steps into the dining-room, or a baker-woman illuminates her wares by means of burning candles. Trivial jokes which give the opportunity for laughter (like a waffle-baker tidying her offspring, or a mouse gone astray in a tidy room) are never scorned. His is a witless, dreary, petrified art, enlivened by no thought and pulsating with no idea. In the soul of Dou there lives the soul of that Holland which clipped the wings of Rembrandt, the only real "Flying Dutchman," and let Hals starve.

Frans van Mieris differs from Dou only in that the subjects of his pictures are even more presentable in the *salon*. Young ladies breakfasting on oysters, trifling with a parrot or a lap dog, playing the lute, or looking at themselves in a mirror, are his usual themes. With the same neatness as Dou his woollen jackets, he paints the shimmering silk clothes, plumed hats, pearl necklaces, and ermine furs. Willem Mieris, Eglon van

der Neer, Caspar Netscher, and Gottfried Schalcken offer further variations of such miniature fabric painting. At the same time a smooth execution is supplemented by an affected grace—something rosy, insipid, and *banal*, resembling heads of the Niobe type. Columns and reliefs having nothing to do with the subject are everywhere added; and finally, for love of the accessories, the subjects themselves are changed. As, during the honeymoon of young Holland, men had taken pleasure in spirited pictures of peasants, musicians, dentists, quacks, and rat-catchers, and at the same time of artistic deftness had delighted in Dou's naturalistic rendition of a pewter mug, flower-pot, majolica bowl, or broomstick: now light bucolic shepherd scenes of affected elegance came into fashion. At first crude, then petrified and trivial, art now becomes insipid and affected.

The portraits explain how this change came about. In the oldest, stiff-necked democrats and rugged plebeians are represented; their sons became wealthy householders, ostentatious of their riches. The third generation is ashamed of its burgher blood and, seeking to acquire the aristocratic charm of the former tyrants, plays the nobleman. The men appear in theatrical poses, a puffed cavalier's cloak over their shoulder; they coquet with white hands and adorn their breasts with golden chains. They are perfumed in order not to smell of herring; they bow their heads with servile gratitude when some foreign potentate bestows upon

them a courtly title or the honour of knighthood. The ladies are no longer cooks, but smile discreetly behind their fans. Books of instruction in aristocratic manners appear. Courts, they say, are the seats of culture, and only by travelling can young men acquire the elegance and polish, the aptitude and charm which distinguish the courtier from the *bourgeois*. Even in the style of their letters and in literature the emphasis upon the courtly element may be observed. In the beginning straightforward and without formality, the Dutch now address each other with pompous titles. Upon the stage, which formerly produced Brederoo's folk-dramas, the "lofty fates of distinguished persons" are celebrated.

This path from burgherdom to servility was also followed by art. The first symptom was the adaptation by Terborg of the Spanish courtly style to Dutch portraiture, with the result that the jolly merchants of Deventer assumed the proud reserve of Spanish grandees. It will be remembered that Sweerts added *equus* to his signature. Wouwerman painted bankers' sons fighting duels and riding forth with their ladies, like young noblemen, to the falcon hunt. Weenix, Hondekoeter, and de Heem treated still-life as if their pictures were intended not for burghers' houses but for royal palaces. Now the entire trend was towards showy decoration or affected æsthetics. The burgher boasted of his classic culture, and even Catholicism, against which he had formerly struggled, found

advocates as being the "religion of the distinguished."

Gerard de Lairese in his *Schilderboek* spoke the word which lay upon the lips of all. He mocks Hals who had "sought the beautiful among fishwives and apple-vendors" and demands of the artist that he shall acquire "what the fine world considers good taste." This good taste, however, is the courtly style of France; Lebrun is declared to be the greatest of all painters, and the landscapist is recommended to paint pictures with "straight trees, stately palaces, and graceful fountains"—that is to say, landscapes in the style of Le Nôtre. As both painters and patrons have become cavaliers, the problem now is to "ennoble" art also; to create the grand style which the antique and the *cinquecento* taught.

This need was filled by the knight Adriaen van der Werff, who, with the dainty brush of Mieris, treated with classical correctness and academic coldness the subjects of historical painting—such biblical and mythological themes as were popular during the period of aristocratic patronage of art. A son of democratic and Protestant Holland, raised to the nobility, painted for a Catholic elector, whose court painter he was, the mysteries of the Catholic church. With this ends the tragi-comedy of the first appearance of the *bourgeoisie* in art. In the meanwhile, the French invasion of 1672 put an end to the world-wide importance of the Dutch state; the *bourgeoisie* and their art again bowed to the sceptre of monarchism.

## Chapter VI

### The Aristocratic Art of France

#### I. The Age of Louis XIV

**D**URING the first half of the seventeenth century France did not yet possess an indigenous school of painting. Her great painters, like Poussin and Claude, lived at Rome; and the few who were active in Paris merely reflect the different tendencies which prevailed in foreign countries.

During his stay of fifteen years in Italy, Simon Vouet had become a disciple of Guido Reni, and continued, after his return to France in 1627, to labour in the same Bolognese style.

Louis Le Nain seems to be connected with the school of Frans Hals, and it is surprising with what serious objectivity he depicts the life of the people. The earliest of his paintings possessed by the Louvre is entitled the *Family of the Smith*. A man at the anvil pauses for a moment in his work, while his wife and children follow his glance, as if the door were about to open and a visitor to enter. In the second painting a peasant's family sits at table: in the foreground, the husband with a woollen cap upon his head, raising his

glass thoughtfully to his lips, and beside him his wife who looks wearily up from her work. A third picture, the *Return from the Fields*, is remarkable from a colouristic point of view; for no brown light but the simple hue of the day is spread over the landscape. While other painters of his day had selected jolly episodes from peasant life and treated them as caricatures in the spirit of the *bambocciade*, Le Nain created simple pictures of labourers, quite modern in charm.

Philippe de Champaigne, a born Fleming, is known partly by religious pictures, partly by his portraits. The learned world and the Jansenist clergy were his sitters, and this spirit of Jansenism gave his large pictures something cool, sober, and ascetic. Nuns in ample white woollen robes, the cross of their order upon the heart, the veil upon the head, sit praying in simple cells. Upon a straw stool lies a Bible, and a wooden crucifix hangs upon the wall. Yellow, black, and brown heighten the gloomy effect.

Eustache Le Sueur depicted in the same spirit the life of the monk. His pictures of the *Life of St. Bruno* have not the power to arrest the indifferent observer passing through the halls of the Louvre; but if one remains standing before them, he feels the charm of this timid, retiring art. In that lonesome, peaceful room it seems as if a church had been built in the midst of the museum, or as if one breathed the soft, quiet air of a monastic cell. Solemn and simple are the compositions, unaffected and without exaggeration the

attitudes and gestures; and all the colours are attuned to brown or greenish-white harmonies, as if he himself had, like St. Bernard, taken the vow of poverty and humility. With monkish self-denial Le Sueur avoids whatever charms the eye or enchants the senses. A painter-monk like Fra Angelico seems to have created these works, and one understands how the person of this man, who lived so quietly and died so young (at the age of thirty-eight), was easily encompassed by the veil of legend. Like Memling, it is said, he had as a young man fallen in love with a nun, become a melancholic, and ended as a monk in a Carthusian monastery.

Sebastien Bourdon is as wavering and versatile as Le Sueur is one-sided. He began as an adventurer and ended as an academician; he laboured sometimes in Rome, sometimes in Paris and Sweden; so also as a painter he appears, Proteus-like, under the most varied masks. There are decorative pieces by him which might come from the school of Caravaggio, and religious paintings in which he is as classically severe as Poussin himself. Yet on the other hand, he painted portraits, like that of Descartes, and genre-pictures, gypsies and beggars, which prove a connection with the school of Caravaggio.

Salvator Rosa and Michelangelo Cerquozzi found a French counterpart in Jacques Courtois, called Le Bourguignon. A gloomy sky, with bright yellow clouds, dust and powder, and fighting lansquenets—such is usually the content of his pictures.

France indeed produced a number of great personalities, which, however, were less able to form a national school because the leading spirits were active not in Paris but in Rome. In order that French art should become an organic whole, the centre of artistic activity had to be shifted from Rome to Paris, and a common field of labour had to be provided for artists. This period opens with Louis XIV. This age is called by the French *le grand siècle*; and in so far as one understands grand as identical with *grandiose*, the designation is justified. No ruler ever made art more subservient to himself on a more magnificent scale; no one to the same extent surrounded himself with pomp and splendour. Louis XIV. is a kingly builder *par excellence*. As Augustus could say of himself that he found his capital built of brick and plaster, and left it a city of marble and bronze, so Louis conjured up fairy palaces from a sandy soil; not indeed at Paris, but at Versailles. As all of his buildings demanded artistic decoration, an activity began upon such a scale as the world had never before seen. As numerous as formerly in little Holland, the painters sprouted from the earth. France, which had previously for the most part supplied its need of art from Italy and the Netherlands, now provides other European countries with art and with artists.

To one encountering in the galleries the works of the masters who gave their stamp to the age of Louis XIV., they seem more colossal than refined, more bombastic



than distinguished. Among these painters is van der Meulen, who immortalised, in gigantic pictures, the king's military career, his campaigns, sieges, parades, and triumphant entries; Alexandre Desportes, who was employed to portray the hunting-dogs of the great king; and Jean Baptiste Monnoyer, in whose hands even the flower became solemn, rigid, and typical. Others are Le Brun, Coypel, Blanchard, Audran, Houasse, Jouvenet—how mannered, pompous, and inflated their works appear! Nothing can occur without a great apparatus. The columns must be twisted, the velvet puffed. Like the *Précieuses ridicules*, they seem to take pains to express the simplest thing in an affected manner and with bombastic phraseology. Biblical pictures always receive the same theatrical heads and hollow declaiming gestures; and in antique subjects the same Roman tragedy is always declaimed in monotonous, inflated Alexandrine verses.

But in the midst of these imposing historical subjects also hang the portraits of Rigaud and Largillière, in which one makes the acquaintance of the men whom the painters served. In self-conscious, challenging dignity, too exalted to be ludicrous, and in the midst of pompous surroundings, Louis XIV. stands before us. The halo of a gigantic wig with heavy curled locks encircles his head; an immense blue velvet mantle, embroidered with golden lilies, envelops him; and the luxurious showy frame is adorned with a heavy golden crown. Velasquez, van Dyck, Rigaud—these

HYACINTHE RIGAUD



PORTRAIT OF LOUIS XIV.

*Versailles*



are the three worlds of courtly portraiture. The Spanish kings knew nothing of the world outside of the Alcazar; their pictures are ancestral portraits handed down in the royal family. The aristocrats of van Dyck have come into contact with the common people. Delicate and pale, conversing only in low tones, they grow nervous when a loud or rude tone sounds in their ear, and turn shuddering when their sleeves are in danger of being touched by a coarse-grained commoner. Louis XIV., on the other hand, does not show the world his blue blood, but his royal power; he is not like Charles I., a nobleman in his attitude towards the people, but a king towards his subjects. The distinction which with van Dyck lies in a pale complexion, white, blue-veined hands, and fragile tenderness, lies with Rigaud in the majestic pose, the flowing curtains, and the insignia of royalty which he displays. *L'État c'est moi*, Louis seems to say; and like the king are the rest. They are portrayed in typical rigidity and solemn grandeur, with that stately tread which the parquetry of the court demands. Every one assumes a pompous expression and makes a significant gesture with his hand. The ladies are draped with a princely mantle hanging from their shoulders; the poet, encircled with a royal mantle, leans with a heroic gesture upon a lyre; the preacher holds a Bible and raises a gesticulating hand; the merchant sits at his desk, the astronomer at his globe. But they are not occupied with their own thoughts; they turn to the beholder, as

typical as the king. As Louis XIV. displays his crown, so they show the insignia of their power: books which they have written, works of art which they have created, the ships which they send over the sea. Even when they occasionally appear in *négligée*, the dressing-gown is of blue silk or red velvet. Even the home life of a private individual is a gala performance, like a royal *levée*. Be it observed, however, that Rigaud and Largillière are not rhetoricians, but the faithful historians of their age. All things that they portray—swords and shoe-buckles, furs and laces, wigs and fans—they paint exactly after nature. If they appear so pompous and never unlace their buskins, this is not to be ascribed to their art. They paint as they do because the subjects themselves were pompous, stilted, and dignified. It was the age when the spirit of royalism penetrated even into the family and children addressed their parents with *vous*, with *Monsieur mon père* and *Madame ma mère*.

After the examination of these portraits, the gallery pictures of Le Brun and his associates also appear in a different light. For this time the classic repose of Poussin and the quiet sentiment of Le Sueur were no longer suitable. What art was called upon to express was majesty, rigid ceremonial, and typical dignity. It must be showy, blending, and bombastic as the sentences of Bossuet and the verses of Racine; must disguise the simple with the sustained dignity of pompous generalities. And be it particularly noted

that the picture-gallery is in no sense a home for works of this kind, because they are only parts of a great decorative scheme.

No one can escape the imposing impression made by the palace at Versailles. The building is not planted in the midst of a beautiful nature; the common opinion that a house should correspond with the character of the soil upon which it stands is glibly disregarded. The king gives all the more evidence of his almighty power by conjuring a paradise from a desert and causing fountains to spring forth from a dry and sandy soil.

The palace rises on artificially created soil, separated from the common earth. Every stone proclaims that royalty dwells here. Mighty stairways lead to the wide halls, which gleam and glitter in golden splendour. Bronze and marble figures, hermæ, or atlantes, fill niches and cornices, or bow in homage to the king from the ceiling. The park is wide as the horizon, excluding every common neighbourhood from the eye. Wherever one glances, nature has laid aside her power and bowed to the will of the Great One. The straight paths, the trim walls of foliage, the stiff and solemn rondels—everything expresses the submission of free and defiant nature to cultivation and rule. No tree may grow as it will; the pruning of the gardener gives it the form which the king demands. No stream flows where it wishes, but submitting to the will of the king, rises as a column of water towards heaven or

streams as a cascade down white marble stairs. This is the language of royalty by the grace of God, which not only rules man but subdues by the power of his sceptre hill and valley, the wild water and the free forest. It is the spirit of that young Louis who, at the age of fourteen, appeared in his parliament riding-whip in hand. *Suprema lex voluntas!*

If one imagine people suitable for this world—gentlemen with flowing wigs and gold-embroidered robes, and ladies with high *fontange* and stiff silk dresses which in long gleaming train sweep over the smoothly polished floor—one recognises with what truth and power this art reflects the spirit of the age. No period has to the same extent proceeded from the conception of the subordination of all component parts to the work of art as a whole. The style of Louis XIV. labours on a grand scale, with buildings and gardens, with trees and water. The palace with its decorated columns, its gardens, cascades, and statues—all of these together form the work of art, and every single feature is only a decorative element. This must not be overlooked in forming an opinion of the painters of the epoch.

In the halls of the palace, indeed, one experiences at first only a shudder, because the content of the pictures, the deification of the king, corresponds so little with the sentiment of our own time. It would also be a waste of time to seek the individuality of the artist behind the pictures. A man like Louis XIV. would

tolerate free individuality as little as would a captain exercising his company. Whether the ceilings are decorated by Blanchard or Coypel, by Houasse, Audran, or Jouvenet, these names do not signify artistic personality. All submit to the sovereign will of the king of France and his minister of fine arts. A hundred painters are embodied in a single artist. Louis XIV., as overlord of architecture, sculpture, painting, and landscape gardening, named Le Brun as commanding general of the army of painters. He leads the manœuvres and gives the orders, which are carried out in the proper spirit of subordination. While this is very unedifying for psychological observation, it was, on the other hand, just because of this uniform direction that Versailles became such an imposing work of art; a work which gives expression to a whole epoch, a historical document.

Quite astonishing is the lung-power of Le Brun. For fifty years he succeeded in expressing himself in the pulpit style of Bossuet without ever losing breath. He set all Olympus into motion praising the power and wisdom of his lord: all kings and heroes of the past prostrated themselves in the dust before Louis. Here he extols him in the figure of Alexander the Great; there the sun-god Apollo must increase the fame of the "Sun King"; there again the oriental monarchs Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus do him homage. In the gallery of mirrors the warlike career of the king is declaimed and embellished with pompous allegories:



the four quarters of the earth and the Muses doing him homage. It is no less astonishing what an adept was Le Brun in heightening the effect. The first rooms are treated in simple white and the nearer one approaches to the chamber of the king, the more the splendour increases. Green marble alternates with gold, deep blue with silver; in the last room, the wall of which is adorned with the great relief of the king on horseback, there is only gold in broad masses spread over mantels, doors, and windows. Yet, with all this bombastic servility, a great and ancient culture is everywhere evident. This may be seen in going from the old parts of the palace to the new, in which Horace Vernet celebrated *la grande nation* in an equally bombastic but in a common and banal manner. His pictures differ from those of Le Brun as the *King with the Umbrella* differs from *le Roi Soleil*.

By the side of palace architecture, in the last years of Louis XIV. church-building assumed an important rôle. For even the king was a man, and after he had emptied the cup of life to the dregs, he felt the need of reconciling himself with God. Madame de Maintenon influenced him in the spirit of Jesuitic piety, and there arose the dome of the Invalides in Paris, the churches of Notre Dame and of St. Louis, and the palace chapel at Versailles—all works of Mansart, which, compared with the ostentatious Baroque of the palace of Versailles, indicate a return to severe classicism and have more in common with Palladio than Bernini.

Noël Coypel was commissioned to decorate the dome of the Invalides, Charles de la Fosse the palace chapel of Versailles. Pierre Mignard, who after the death of Le Brun was entrusted with the decoration of all royal undertakings, painted a cupola fresco in the church Val de Grâce. And although these pictures seem eclectic and his Madonnas soft and insipid, he also painted the spirited portrait of Marie Mancini, the niece of Mazarin, which it is impossible for any one who has stood before it in the Berlin Gallery to forget.

The age of Louis XIV. was a proud, rigid, bombastic, and boastful age. Only gala performances, significant gestures, and representative splendour were popular. In it the solemn grandeur of the Baroque reached its acme, and further progress in this direction was impossible. The style of Louis XIV. was not only a natural product of the age, but also the necessary prelude to that which followed. Men had first to grow weary of gazing upon the powerful and imposing before the grandiose could be followed by the graceful, declamation by delicacy, the sublime by the elegant, the ceremonial by the dainty: in short, the Baroque by the Rococo.

### **11. The Spirit of the Rococo**

There lies, according to the legend, somewhere in this world, an island called Cythera, where the heaven is ever blue and the roses ever bloom. Throughout the day, the island lies in repose like

a sleeping beauty; but towards evening, when the earth is enveloped in silence, a busy activity begins in Cythera. Then cupids begin their services and make ready the boats to carry over the pilgrims who await there on the shore. These are young men and beautiful women, clad not in brown cowls but in silk and velvet, with flower-wreathed shepherds' staves in their hands. When they have entered the boat and approach the enchanted island, all the world is forgotten. A soft, sensual atmosphere caresses them; the roses waft perfume and the doves coo. The marble statue of Aphrodite gleams in the green foliage, and with beating hearts they sink at the feet of the goddess. Such a picture is the glittering title-page of the art of the eighteenth century.

At the beginning of the seventeenth century a spirit of a convulsed, wild piety passed over the world. After the humanistic vagaries of the Renaissance men did penance in sackcloth and ashes. Then came the compromise; and the artists of the Counter-reformation, at first so gloomy and threatening, ascribed in Flanders the cult of the senses and the pleasures of the flesh, "even to beings of the other world." France had transplanted the pomp of Baroque art from the church into the palace, and, instead of the saints, had served the Sun King. But finally the century ended as it had begun, for the *Roi Soleil* himself was frightened at his resemblance to God. His unfortunate wars, his financial difficulties, and the deaths in the royal

family filled him with gloom. The noisy and glittering festivities ceased, and, as is the constant complaint of the letters of Princess Elizabeth Charlotte, the fashion of being joyful was discontinued.<sup>1</sup> In conjunction with Madame de Maintenon the king issued edicts of faith, had churches built and masses read. At the beginning of the eighteenth century France had more monasteries than Italy; the number of monks and nuns was 90,000, and that of the clergy 150,000. Great pulpit orators used all the powers of their splendid oratory to call Paris to penance. A tiresome royalty decreed piety and a clerical spirit burdened the land.

Then the Great King died, and society breathed afresh. As the regent, Philip of Orléans was himself the first to throw off the mask it was no longer necessary to pretend dejected and croaking piety, and to yawn behind the fans. The imprisoned joy in life burst forth afresh. There was also money to satisfy all desires. As long as Louis XIV. lived, the keen trade projects of the speculator Law had remained plans; but the Duke of Orléans was easily won. A series of stock speculations and projects brought money into circulation which permitted a luxury that had formerly been impossible. As men had prayed, they now wished to enjoy themselves, as they had been bored they now

<sup>1</sup> A German princess, the daughter of the Elector Palatine Karl Ludwig and wife to Philip, Duke of Orléans, brother of Louis XIV. Her letters to her friends and relatives were edited by Bodemann (2 vols., Hanover 1801).—ED.

wished to be merry. The portraits show that suddenly quite a new race of men appeared on the scene. There were no longer proud generals, dignified archbishops, and ministers granting audiences, but only men of fashion and elegance. They move about gallantly, speak gallantly, smile gallantly, and are versed in the most beautiful compliments and their effect upon the fair sex. The features of the portraits are no longer dignified but soft and rosy; the pose is no longer impressive but dainty and refined; the toilette, formerly solemn and rigid, assumes an elegant *négligée* and a certain feminine character. Velvet and silk in all shades, laces about the neck and on cuffs, embroideries in gold, silver, and silk are worn, even by old gentlemen. All are as lithe and slender, as effeminate and eternally young, as charming and redolent with the perfume of roses, as if they were no longer men but grown-up cupids.

Even more conspicuous is the change in women. The ladies at the close of the seventeenth century, in their stiff whalebone corsets, have an Olympian grandeur, like that of Juno. The figure is majestic, and full, gleaming shoulders and fine arms emerge from ermine mantles. But they are also unfeminine, unapproachable, and dignified, the type of Louis XIV. and of the Great Elector translated into womanhood. The mouth is firmly closed, the brow energetic and virile, the eye glances firmly, cold as metal, from under the hard brows; the hands are plump and expressionless.

These are women like the proud Montespan, at the sight of whom Hebbel cried, "Such a woman could be loved only by a king." Now there are no longer women of majestic beauty. If they then seemed forty years old, they are now either under twenty or over sixty. If they then sought to impress by their fulness of form, they are now ethereal beings who are animated only by spirit and piquancy. The figures, then powerful, have become delicate and light; the faces, once proud, are now childish, and no longer painted or powdered white. The lines of the mouth have lost their proud seriousness, and curve in soft mischief or in a delicate lovable smile. The bust has lost its fulness and is only lightly revealed under a silken bodice. Even the jewelry is different: the heavy rings and chains which were formerly worn give place to dainty filigree-work. The taste for the imposing is followed by the taste for graceful charm, unapproachable indifference by neatness and seductiveness; the dignified by the coquettish, and bodily by spiritual beauty.

The life of these people also stands in sharp contrast to that of the past. Then the king was the centre about which all revolved. The idea of unqualified autocracy went so far that Louis's own brother must remain standing in his presence. This solemn court ceremony dominated the world. Men either went to church to gain the favour of Madame de Maintenon or they moved about in dignified rigidity, doing homage to the king in the gorgeous halls of the palace at

Versailles. Now Louis XIV.'s dictum, "I am the state," is supplanted by another: "The aristocracy is humanity." The change which at the end of the century terminated in open popular rebellion began as a palace revolution. Formerly collected about the royal throne, the aristocracy now follows its own paths.

There are two places where they never go—to church and to court. The religious enthusiasm which had risen in the seventeenth century is dead. As if to solace themselves for the years lost under Louis XIV., men now coquette with atheism. As early as 1710, Tyssot de Patot wrote his romance, *Voyages et aventures de Jaques Masse*, in which he speaks of Christ as of Mohammed or Confucius. Later Natoire, the director of the French Academy at Rome, was removed from his post on account of his "exaggerated piety." The century of religious wars was followed by the century which permitted every one to be saved in his own fashion; the age of the last saints by that of the clever mockers who believed neither in heaven nor in hell.

"Ci gît dans une paix profonde  
Cette Dame de volupté,  
Qui pour plus grande sûreté  
Fit son paradis de ce monde":

thus reads the light epitaph of the Marquise de Boufflers, and these words may be written upon most gravestones of the eighteenth century. As men had formerly striven for the heavenly paradise, they now enjoyed life in full draughts and died with a joyful con-

sciousness of having enjoyed it. As George Sand's grandmother once related to her: "Your grandfather was handsome, elegant, carefully attired, delicate, perfumed, active, lovable, tender, and joyful until his death. At that time there was no repulsive bodily pain; one preferred to die at a ball or in the theatre rather than in one's bed among four wax tapers and ugly, black-gowned men. We enjoyed life, and when the time came to leave it no one sought to deprive others of their pleasure in it. The last farewell of my husband consisted in his bidding me to survive him long and to enjoy life." Those who had not lived before 1789, wrote Talleyrand, did not know the sweetness of life.

Men now fled from the suffocating court life to a joyous Arcadia, from the halls of the palace into nature. If formerly the typical had prevailed, the constraint of rigid etiquette, men now loved the *laissez-aller* and yearned for harmless pleasure. More beautiful than gaudy palaces seemed the thatched cottage which might be bought in the country; more beautiful than the formal gardens of Le Nôtre, the woods and the fields where the cowbells tinkled, the dairies with their poultry yards, and the pigeon cote. They reclined at their ease in the meadows, along the brooks, and in the woodland glades, arranged *bals champêtres* and *déjeuners sur l'herbe*, and danced graceful gavottes and sportive minuets. They hastened to the neighbouring village where the peasants gathered for the yearly



market. The formal court dress was laid aside, the wig disappeared, and, in dainty peasant costumes, they played at being peasants, shepherds, and shepherdesses. In 1697 Louis XIV. had closed the Italian theatre because the actors ventured remarks upon Madame de Maintenon. The regent re-opened the Italian comedy in 1716, and these comedies became an important part in the programme of the pleasures of distinguished society. The time was passed in balls, theatrical performances, musical evenings, and especially with masks. Not only were the actors of the Comédie Française, the Comédie Italienne, and the Opéra often ordered to appear in the Palais Royal; even the rope-dancers were considered presentable. The young men took lessons from the actors, and the ladies studied with them pieces which they produced upon the stage. It was so jolly and offered such material for dainty intrigues and gallant experiences to wear the gay spangles of Pierrot and Colombine.

Like etiquette they also avoided scrupulous modesty because it appeared pedantic. Marriage was considered a picture in grey whose monochrome must be enlivened by rosy tones. "What a tiresome creature this Julie must be," wrote Madame de Pompadour after a perusal of Rousseau's *Nouvelle Héloïse*. At that time Paris became the magic city where the nabobs of the whole world assembled, the island of Cythera where every one who brought money, spirit, and love of life would be received. Even sensuality now assumed a

new aspect. In the *grand siècle*, which only recognised the powerful and pathetic, it had been a great passion, which Rubens had painted brutal and animal. Now the nerves had become tired, and could endure only discreet and delicate excitement. So the eighteenth century, which loved only little things, made love a flirtation. "Great passions," wrote Mercier, "are nowadays rare. Men no longer fight duels for women, and we see no forsaken lover seeking by poison to escape his suffering." What was formerly said with sobs and sighs is now said chatingly in light conversation. There is no glowing desire, no impetuous passion but artificial courting, flattering and homage, wooing and languishing. A piquant smile takes the place of hearty laughter and pastoral play supplants the former coarseness.

New people need a new art. The great change in culture which took place at the beginning of the century was also accompanied by a clear, far-reaching æsthetic revolution. Formerly the heroic Corneille and the classically severe Racine had dominated literature. These pompous and solemn stylists, who stalked about majestically, were now followed by clever prattlers who, in spicy and charming tones, without ever growing coarse, spoke of love and nothing but love. As the nervous temperament of the age was no longer pleased with the perpetual recurrence of iron measures, the tyrannical rhythms of the Alexandrine verse disappeared and the reverberating periods of Boileau

vanished in a dazzling display of wit and humour. In letters a mischievous grace replaced bombast. The Amadis, the Robinsons, and the popular romances whose scene is laid in China are characteristic of the arcadian trend of the age. The natural, innocent, and free—all that was missed at home—was sought in distant lands, upon lonely islands or in the land of Confucius. For to the Chinese they were bound by an especial tie of interest; since to them they owed the tea, the new drink which was so popular in the eighteenth century. At the same time the Celestials were considered a happy people in a state of nature, who, free from courtly constraint, lived a paradisiac life upon the shores of the Pacific.

Parallel with this change in literature a change occurred in art. Architecture, which in the seventeenth century had built extensive churches and royal palaces, now creates dainty residences and country-seats. The nobility, heretofore bound to Versailles, now builds its own quarters. The Faubourg Saint-Germain and the villas about Paris were constructed, and in a style the opposite of all that formerly prevailed. As in life everything pompous and heroic, so also in architecture everything ponderous must be avoided. Majesty was followed by daintiness, and show by comfort. The rooms are smaller, and serve the purpose no longer of show but of comfort or of the refined enjoyment of life. Instead of living in the formal, glittering halls reserved for especial festivities, they lived, loved, and

chatted in little salons and boudoirs. From the panelled walls the last vestiges of constructive elements disappear: for nothing rigid or massive was permitted to disturb the gracefulness. As they who had so long borne the oppression of royalty now made themselves free, so also they released the architectural supporting members of their functions, and transformed them into jolly people, who joyfully and without trouble, for politeness's sake, played the rôle of caryatids. Ornament also, which had formerly shown measured dignity, now received the free and easy movement of life; those flowing forms, those charming informalities with which the man of the world places himself above the rules of etiquette. Flowers and arabesques, thyrsi and shepherds' staves, glasses and grapes, fauns and nymphs are commingled in joyful, trifling playfulness. Even the unsymmetrical character of the Rococo has a psychological explanation. The people who had been so long compelled to live according to fixed rules now took such pleasure in the unrestrained and the capricious that they intentionally avoided the principle of all former laws of beauty, viz., symmetry, and searched for everything which in wanton humour mocks at regularity.

Furniture in the seventeenth century had been monumental and pompous, as if it all came from the halls of the palace of Versailles; it now became light and coquettish, dainty and small, as if it were all intended for a lady's boudoir. Comfortable upholstered chairs

and soft, yielding sofas covered with silken cushions took the place of the stiffly painted, straight-lined armchairs. Japanese screens and Chinese pagodas, Sèvres vases and dainty clocks are scattered over mantles, tables, and consoles. Soft and fragrant perfumes, such as vanilla and heliotrope, fill the air; a luxurious feminine spirit pervades everything.

Sculpture, which in the seventeenth century had been colossal, now becomes a miniature art, which no longer peoples churches and gardens with monumental groups but nestles in the salon and the boudoir. Its principal materials are no longer stone, marble, and bronze but gold, silver, faïence, and porcelain. The porcelain statuettes in particular signify for the art of the eighteenth century what the terra-cottas did for the Greek art. The relief, formerly boldly cut, is now carved in soft and delicate outlines.

From this it is evident what character painting was forced to adopt in order to harmonise with its surroundings: for, like art under Louis XIV., the Rococo must also be regarded as a whole. Indeed, there never, perhaps, existed a style in which everything formed such a harmonious part of a clever *ensemble*.

It is in the first place characteristic that artistic productions decreased. An epoch so spirituelle as the Rococo preferred also the least material of the arts—music. This was the prevailing art of the age, and to her painters did homage in numerous allegories. The form of the pictures had also to change.

As the seventeenth century chose the colossal, so the eighteenth preferred the dainty. Monumental tasks in great historic style were no longer assigned, or else executed by artists who survived from the time of Louis XIV. The younger artists, hostile to all grandiose undertakings, created their daintiest works in fans, piano decorations, and screens. Even in panel painting a diminution of size appeared; for the full length was considered crude, and only small and dainty proportions were permissible. Another consequence of the love of the unsymmetrical was the popular practice of giving a curious, irregular form to the pictures.

It was all over with religious painting. All the pious martyrs and ecstatic Madonnas which were painted in the seventeenth century had nothing to say to this age. Ancient and rigid Venice, is the only surviving city where important religious pictures still originated. Otherwise only such decorations occur which, in accordance with the free-thinking trend of the age, are connected with Nathan the Wise's story of the rings, that is to say the theme of the equal value of all religions. One picture from the Bible is especially popular: *Sara Leading the fair Hagar to her Husband Abraham*. The whole spirit of the Rococo is expressed in such a work.

After they had come to the point of making life pleasant, they wished to see only pictures which proclaimed this gospel of joyful, sensual pleasure. Having

freed themselves from the bonds of etiquette, they also demanded of painting that it should be lively and clever and reflect in elegant lines and dainty colours the life which they saw about them, or as they dreamed it. The theme of the works is therefore the same which Rubens treated in his *Love Gardens*, except that the place of his full-blooded voluptuous women is taken by dainty ladies with thin wasp-waists, and that the coarse, grasping Flemings are replaced by slender cavaliers with gallant manners. When they drank Chinese tea from Chinese cups, they also loved to see the Chinese in painting. Conscious of guilt they loved to dream of childhood's happy days; tired of the city, they dreamed of rustic idylls—not the peasant who in hard work wins his nourishment from the soil; but the countryman of romance, a happy being who leads an ethereal existence in the open air.

Since not the coarse but the delicate, not the passionate but the discreet, not the loud but the quiet is presentable in the salon, so all obtrusive effects of colour are avoided. The age of Louis XIV. loved showy pomp; a bright blue and red in combination with gold were the favourite colours of the king who determined the costumes of his subjects and the taste of the painters. In the decoration of rooms also, gold and pompous red, brown wood and dark gobelins prevailed. The eighteenth century in its over-refined daintiness found that such colours distress the eye and used only light, soft, and broken tones. The loud

fanfares of an earlier day are changed into a soft colourature, and the shrill sounds of the brass instruments are followed by the wooing, insinuating notes of the flute. The white tone of porcelain was especially popular, and determined the colour of the decoration of rooms as well as the tone of paintings. As they were so fond of being out-of-doors they also loved to see the salon flooded by the bright light of day. High windows reaching to the floor gave light to the rooms. The walls were tinted white; the gobelins, the silk window-curtains, the wood and upholstery of the furniture were bright and light in colour. Mirrors scattered throughout the room also had the purpose of increasing the light. Even the former popular gold ornamentation frequently yields to silver. In these white rooms, pervaded by the light of day or by the candle-light of Venetian chandeliers, the cool silvery tones of high-keyed painting were alone suitable. Dainty harmonies of dull yellow, light blue, pink and lilac, greyish blue, greyish yellow, and dull green became especially popular. The artists also endeavoured to free oil painting from its fatty and heavy qualities; and as, notwithstanding their efforts, this was not altogether possible, new technical processes, like pastel painting, were invented. The pastel alone solved the problem of relieving figures of all earthly heaviness, and could perfectly present these evanescent, flower-like natures with the rustling silk robes and powdered hair.



“Sieh meinen feinen Flügelstaub,  
Ich flattere und fliege,”—

such is the beginning of a Rococo song, which also characterises the nature of Rococo painting. The pictures are pale as the complexion of the people. They have a touch of the ethereal, just as men had themselves been transformed from heavy and full-blooded into light and ethereal beings. The age of highest development of power was followed by one of the highest refinement, the century of passion and majestic grandeur by one of grace and elegance. It is no accident that France assumed the leading position during this epoch. The individual nations have always found an artistic expression at the moment when the spirit of the time and the spirit of the nation are in unison. As in the seventeenth century gloomy Spain had been the leading country, now when the Counter-reformation was followed by a new ebullition of sensuality, France placed itself at the head, and succeeded in accomplishing what since Fouquet's Madonna and the novels of the Parisian Boccaccio seem to have been the destiny of the French.<sup>1</sup>

### III. Watteau

His first pictures create more of a Flemish than a French impression. One awaits *fêtes galantes* and

<sup>1</sup> The picture in the Antwerp Gallery referred to represents the Madonna with the features of Agnes Sorel, the mistress of Charles VII., suckling the Child. Although Boccaccio was born in Paris,

hymns to love, but their content is scenes from soldier and camp life.

Watteau's youth fell in the time of the war of the Spanish Succession. As the Netherlands, his home, were the scene of a motley military life, he began with scenes like those painted by the Dutch in the age of Frans Hals. In a picture of the Rothschild collection recruits march over a plain under a heavy storm; in others he groups soldiers and market-women, waggons and tents in the midst of Flemish landscapes. From such representations of military life he proceeds to similar scenes of peasant life. In his picture *True Gaiety* a couple dances in front of a tavern, while upon an upturned tub sits a man playing a violin. In another picture a group of peasants are drinking before a tavern, and others stagger homewards. All are genuine Flemish paintings; a new Teniers seems to have appeared. But the women are of a different race. With their white bodices and clean aprons, their elegant motions and dainty heads, they have something tidy and graceful which does not belong to Teniers's art.

Yet one has no idea that this peasant-painter is destined to become a master of the graces. Not until he had returned to Paris did his themes change. In place of the boors, elegant French society appears.

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of a French mother and a Florentine father, his early boyhood was passed in Florence, and at fifteen he was in Naples. He can therefore scarcely be called a Parisian, nor can the spicy character of his literary work be considered a French characteristic.—ED.

Different pictures reveal how gradually the change was accomplished. A composition which only exists in a print shows a gondolier upon a placid canal. The coarse-grained Flemish figures have become graceful and distinguished; and only the background, with its canals and palaces, is still in the manner of the panoramas of cities by Jan van der Heyden. The same is true of the picture called the *Promenade upon the Walls*: distinguished ladies and chatting young gentlemen, but in the background massive towers and symbols of quite a Netherlandish character. There follows the picture of the *Shepherds* in the New Palace at Potsdam: in the foreground a young couple for whom an old shepherd plays the music for a dance; round about maidens looking at the dance and a gentleman swinging a lady. Then come the representations which are known by the names of *The Seductive Offer*, *Recreation*, *Le faux pas*, *L'amour paisible*, *La mariée de village*, *Assemblée galante*, and *Leçon d'amour*—the originals almost all in the royal palace at Berlin, where they were placed by Frederick the Great. If these works, notwithstanding the Rococo costume, still show a certain Flemish heaviness, in the subject which in 1717 he presented as a diploma painting to the Academy, all ties are broken which had bound him to his home. It is the *Embarkation for the Island of Cythera*, that painting of the Louvre, in which the dream of a whole generation takes form. Watteau treated the theme a second time in the painting of the

ANTOINE WATTEAU



THE ISLE OF CYTHERA  
*L'île de Cythère*



palace at Berlin, which is even more jubilant than the Louvre picture. The boat which bears the pilgrim to the enchanted island has become a frigate with fluttering rosy sails. Cupids climb up the mast, fire their arrows at the people, and bind the fair ones with chains of roses. In the few years which he had still to live, there followed all those works which treat the same theme—joy in life and love—in the ever-new variations: Boccaccio's *Decameron* in the garb of the Rococo.

Young men in silk and velvet, a guitar slung by a broad, red ribbon over the shoulder, wander aimlessly about, and pay court to beautiful women: here in the woods, there upon the meadow or in the village, but never in the city or in the vicinity of the palace. They know no hunger, no labour, no cares; for fairies have given them all that they need: their satin shoes, their music books, their shepherds' staffs, and mandolins. The women are children of the same enchanted Elysian world. From blue eyes whose peace is destroyed by no passion, they gaze at their admirers; they carry lace fans and wear dull red, violet, or yellow silk dresses; their slender arms and hands with long white fingers and rosy nails gleam among fine laces. Nothing happens in these pictures; they only sing and play, speak and laugh. Pleasant embraces, tender glances, and gallant words are exchanged. Here a gentleman offers a lady his hand in order to conduct her up a few marble steps; there they dance the gavotte or play blind-man's buff, or young maidens gather white roses

in their aprons; there again a gentleman with his lady leaves the company, and they recline upon the shore of a little lake, behind a tree or low shrubbery. Mischievously laughing, pouting, or slightly offended, half promising, half granting, the ladies accept the homage of their cavaliers. Their eyes sparkle, and tremblingly they breathe the atmosphere of love with which they are surrounded. And when it grows darker the gay company dissolves. The chatting couples disappear, the song and the sound of the guitar are silent, and only sweet, stammering, whispering words are heard.

Occasionally instead of the silken shepherd-costume that of the theatre is worn, although Watteau is not therefore the painter of clowns and wandering comedians. True, some of the paintings, like *Pierrot of the Louvre*, seem portraits of actors, and in others like *Love in the Italian* and *Love in the French Theatre* scenes from comedies are depicted. But most of such pictures are *fêtes galantes*. The distinguished ladies and gentlemen have only assumed the costume of the Italian actors, and use Pierrot's white linen, Harlequin's gay silk, and Scaramouche's gallant mantle to bring variety into their pastoral plays. When evening comes a motley procession of masks swarms through the park. Bright torches throw their light upon grotesquely disguised figures, who seem to have ascended from the kingdom of Lucifer, and yet are only lovers seeking their sweethearts.

For these people Watteau created a nature in which

they belonged. As his landscapes have little in common with the formal gardens of Le Nôtre, they resemble actuality just as little. There are no clouds in them, no wild underbrush, no abrupt cliffs. Mighty trees stretch their crowns, as if protectingly, over the couples; soft sods invite them to repose; roses, daisies, and buttercups bloom in the midst of the woods in order that gentlemen may pick them and wind them into bouquets. Elder and jasmine waft their odour from the hedges; in the air the butterflies dance a noiseless minuet, springs and cascades murmur near by, as if to prevent the love-whispers from being heard. Here a swing is hung, there naked marble statues—cupids, an Antiope, a Venus, a goat-footed satyr seizing a flying nymph, Apollo pursuing Daphne—peep from the green foliage, tempting mortals to similar pranks. Not Pan, but Cupid bears the sceptre in this world. The scene of all these paintings is the isle of Cythera, where the roses ever bloom and the nightingales pipe, where all the trees murmur and whisper of happiness and love.

The colours also are different from those of this world. Watteau required a long time to find the real expression of his feeling for colour. His first pictures show a connection with the older masters—the bright luminosity of Rubens or the warm gold of Titian. But after the *Embarkment for Cythera* his colour-scheme is also independent. If one hears a brass instrument with Rubens, the full tones of the organ with Titian, with Watteau one listens to the vanishing sound of the



flute or the tender, quivering, silvery tone of the violin. The softened, morbidly refined colour corresponds with the ethereal charm of the figures. The earth lies in repose, bathed in mild splendour, and the light green tree-tops move tremulously in the soft air. The hour of sunset, when all is wrapped in the silvery mist of twilight, is Watteau's favourite hour. At the portal of the eighteenth century, he created the most exquisite work which the century produced and directed art into the paths in which it moved for fifty years to come.

How is it that Watteau was the first to depict Parisian elegance? There seems to be an inexplicable contradiction between his art and his life. For he was never a Frenchman, nor was he even of a distinguished family. His native town of Valenciennes, although it had, since the peace of Nymphenburg, belonged to France, was nevertheless a Flemish city. His father was a tiler, who intended to make his son a carpenter, and the boy had great difficulty in acquiring permission to visit the workshop of a village painter. He then formed the great resolution of trying his fortune in Paris, the centre of all taste and of everything beautiful. Alone and without connections, a bashful, reticent young man, he walked the pavements of a great city, his head full of plans, but his pockets empty. He finally obtained occupation with a dealer near the Pont Notre Dame to paint copies of Netherlandish pictures for three francs a week: was afterwards em-

ployed by the scene-painter Gillot, and later by Claude Audran, conservator of the Luxembourg, in decorative works.

How, then, did this son of the Flemish tiler, who knew only the misery of life, become the painter of the graces? The explanation is perhaps to be found in the fact that Watteau was a foreigner. All the Parisian painters passed regardless by this world of beauty which they saw about them daily. Watteau discovered it, because for him the Parisian was something strange and wonderful that he observed with the delighted eye of a peasant lad who had just come into a great city. He had only seen tradesmen, jugglers, bird-dealers and rat-catchers, kirmesses and crude peasant dances in his native home. In Paris, as the associate of Audran, he lived in the centre of the elegant world. Even to-day in the garden of the Luxembourg at night, the spirit of the eighteenth century awakes. The huge old trees wind their branches as if to form fairy groves, and through the long paths loving couples wander, while others whisper on marble benches at the feet of old statues. To-day they are students and grisettes, but they were then young cavaliers and dainty countesses; for the garden of the Luxembourg was the rendezvous of distinguished society in the eighteenth century as was the Bois de Boulogne in the nineteenth. Often the poor tiler's son of Valenciennes looked timidly down from the high windows of the palace upon this elegant life.

What he did not see here he learned at a later period with Crozat, the rich financier: the whole history of the epoch and the most adored women of Paris. As he was a stranger, he was the first to paint what Parisian painters had not considered capable of artistic rendition—a phenomenon which has often been repeated. Jan van Eyck became the father of landscape painting because he travelled from his home to Portugal; Gentile Bellini, the painter of Venice, because he had previously been in Constantinople; Theodocopuli, the first painter of Spanish women, because he was a native, not of Spain, but of Greece.

A second motive must also be considered,—that Watteau himself was a misshapen, embittered man. An incurable malady had made him timid and unsociable. He is described by his biographers as sad and fearful, suspicious and awkward in company, and his portraits confirm this description. His eyes are empty and expressionless as those of a sparrow-hawk; his hands are red and bony, and his mouth is drooping. In the portrait in which he is represented without a wig, it seems as if he wished to mock his own ugliness and sickness. The hair is tangled and disordered, the clothes droop about low shoulders and a small chest. Though surrounded by riches, beauty, coquetry, and elegance, he, the consumptive, had no part in all this.

He too wished to love. This is shown by the mythological pictures which he painted at the beginning of his career. He dreams of rosy bodies, thinks with envy

of Paris, whom the three goddesses chose as an arbiter; he recalls Jupiter who, as a goat-footed satyr, won fair Antiope, and how Vertumnus, in the disguise of an ugly old woman, deluded the fair Pomona. Only to him, the sick man, love is denied. A picture of Cupid disarmed closes the series of his mythological pictures.

With increasing sickness he became more timid and restless. He locked his door and separated from Crozat because he preferred solitude. After taking refuge with a countryman, the painter Vleughels, where no one would seek him, he left even him, because the thought of being a burden to others distressed him, and wandered aimlessly to London, only that he might be unobserved on foreign soil. After his return he painted a sign for his friend the art dealer Gersaint—an ethereal picture which only a consumptive could have created: without substance, the grey rose colours as if breathed upon the wood; the over-slender figures relieved of all that is fleshly; a breath, a nothing. Then he retired to Nogent-sur-Marne. He began an altar-piece which he wished to donate to the church, a *Crucifixion of Christ*, with an expression of pain which only one sick unto death could give. He died on the 18th of July, 1721, at thirty-six years of age.

If one knows this biography, the *fêtes galantes* of Watteau appear in a different light. He became the painter of such subjects because he did not reproduce reality, but conceived *fata morgana* pictures, his own dreams of beauty and of love. While others sailed

arm-in-arm to the fields of the blessed, he, the sick and misshapen, remained alone upon the grey earth, and gazed upon the happy shores from which no ship approached for him. His whole activity was the expression of a great longing; the longing of a sick man for joy, and of a lonely man for love. In youth when he saw others struggle, he thought of soldiers and of camp life, of military fame and of the clangour of trumpets; as Memling in the hospital of Bruges painted himself as a lansquenet galloping through the landscape upon a white horse. At a later period, the weak man was enraptured by the strength of Rubens. Then he, the ugly one, dreamt of beauty. Sitting, weary unto death, in his sick-room, he was borne by the wings of a dream into a distant Utopia, into a land of happiness and of love. When lonely, he thought of women, the touch of whose garments would be blessedness. We can thus understand the sadness, the breath of melancholy, which quivers through these representations of the enjoyment of life; the fact that his figures, although based upon actuality, seem to spring from a distant Elysium. Although they wear the garb of the eighteenth century, his women are not those of whom the authors relate, but are as innocent, as maidenly and bashful, as though they had never before seen a man. Watteau sings of them like a schoolboy to whom love is still a holy mystery. For him the prose of life is interwoven with the magic of fable. Perhaps, indeed, life was modelled after art, and the age

discovered its grace after the dreamer Watteau had revealed it.

#### 10. The Followers of Watteau

Our attention is first attracted by a curious change of parts. Watteau, the Netherlander, seems like a Parisian: Chardin, the Parisian, like a Netherlander. Both adopted their subjects because they saw the world with the eye of a romanticist. Watteau, who came from the country of corpulent Flemish matrons, was captivated by the *chic*, ethereal grace of a Parisian woman. Chardin dreamed that he was far away from the majestic pomp of the style of Louis XIV., by imitating the coy little pictures of the Dutch. Thus the Netherlander became the painter of *fêtes galantes*, while the Parisian extolled the joys of private life.

Heretofore still-life had only been painted in France when it was possible to unite it logically with the figure of Flora or Pomona. Chardin was the first to progress to independent still-life: a successor of the Dutch, and yet in his conception of colour altogether a Rococo master. For the Dutch laboured in warm Rembrandtesque light and shade, while Chardin loved cold harmonies of blue, white, and yellow, which seldom occur in Dutch painting, and then almost exclusively with Terborg. Porcelain, the favourite decorative material of the Rococo, is determinative for his colour-

scale; for objects must be represented in cool values of colour when grouped beside white porcelain dishes. A blue grape lies near a yellow lemon; a white porcelain mug with a blue border stands beside a clay pipe and a copper kettle. Sometimes he paints a table with white cloth, and upon it silver knives and forks, a water goblet, oysters, and glasses; the skin of a pear and the bluish rind of a melon. Books, vases, and marble busts, bluish-white carpets, globes, and atlases—always only cool or mellow, never succulent objects—he arranges so as to form dainty harmonies of colour.

Chardin lived in an old atelier under a roof, a quiet, gloomy room, usually full of the vegetables which he used for his still-life. There was something picturesque about this dusty place, where the dark green of the vegetables stood in harmonious relief against the grey walls, and the blue and white plates formed such pretty spots of colour upon the light table-cloth. In this peaceful, harmoniously lighted room the little scenes from child-life are also set of which one chiefly thinks when Chardin's name is mentioned. The clock ticks and on the cozy porcelain stove the kettle bubbles. He knows no significant moments, and paints in these scenes also nothing but still-life: the poetry of habit. And his portraits show that with him art and personality were one and the same. He looks like a good grandpapa, almost like an old lady; without making any toilette, he painted himself as he moved about at home in his atelier. With a white nightcap upon his head,

a thick cloth about his neck, horn spectacles upon his nose, and above them a green eye-shade, he looks serenely and quietly upon us. Just as quiet and serene is his art. In an age which knew nothing of innocence, he glorified the innocence of childhood; and in depicting this little world with all its games, joys, and sorrows he opened a new field for art. How tenderly he has painted the soul-life of the child: the little hands folded in prayer, the little lips which the mother kisses, the dreamy, wide-open young eyes! Sometimes he shows the laundress, the cook, or the labours of the housewife. He never relates anecdotes. His field of study is the pale, subdued light of dim kitchens, or sunlight playing upon white table-cloths and grey walls. Just because he does not attempt to narrate, his pictures have such a distinguished charm. Art is concealed behind an unspeakable simplicity, which is the more charming because it has been at all times so rare.

That of the many who, following Watteau's example, devoted themselves to the portrayal of the life of the upper classes, not one approaches him in delicacy is due rather to psychic than technical reasons. Watteau, the sick, consumptive man, to whom the happiness of love was never granted, saw the world with the eye of a dreamer. A soft zephyr wafted him into the Elysian fields where nothing had the heaviness of earth and everything was dissolved in poetic mist. His realism, which consisted in the externals of costume, is only apparent. In reality there were no



cavaliers of such grace, no ladies of such a heavenly charm. Only the perfume of flowers and the essence of things is wafted from his pictures. The prose of life is transformed into idealistic poetry.

The artists who follow him stand with both feet firmly planted in real life; they paint not dreams but reality, not elegies but the chronicles of their time. For this reason their works lack the poetic, transfigured spirit which hovers over Watteau's. But although compared with him they have a cruder, soberer, drier effect, they seem charming, light, and free, if we do not spoil our pleasure by thinking of Watteau. With them also there is neither *ennui* nor academic coldness. They follow the most joyful and exquisite fashion which ever existed, and they follow it with great taste. Instinctively and without effort they find for the light, sparkling things which they wish to say an equally light and sparkling style.

Lancret, who worked with Watteau under Gillot, is a delicate and refined master, a reflection of Watteau indeed, but one who mirrors reflected light in individual variations. He is especially fond of painting *fêtes galantes* in the open air, to which he gives the title of the *Four Seasons*. In the springtime young ladies whom the sun has tempted out-of-doors gather flowers in the woods, while the organ grinder plays his instrument near by. In the summer they have assumed the costume of reapers and celebrate the harvest feast; in the autumn they recline with attentive cavaliers

under shady trees; in the winter, muffled in coquettish furs, they are courted upon the ice. Sometimes a Turkish fête is celebrated or an excursion is made to the neighbouring village, where the yearly fair is being celebrated and jugglers dance.

Pater was the first to transfer the scenes of his pictures to the salon. After the new hotels of the Faubourg Saint-Germain had been built and Oppenort had created the new style for applied art, Pater could begin composing the symphonies of the salon. Pretty costumes and clever little figures in the midst of charming Rococo rooms—such is the content of his pictures. Young ladies, packed in amidst soft cushions, recline on silken fauteuils; dainty chambermaids occupied with their mistress; the abbé appears to inquire in regard to her health, the dressmaker submits her latest robes; and lackeys serve tea upon silver waiters. A young couple sitting upon a sofa, in front of a brightly illuminated chimney-piece, is examining engravings so close together that the outlines of the silken breeches of the gentleman are lost in the lady's silk robe. A world of exquisite articles, such as Japanese ivories, bronzes, and oriental fabrics, is all about the figures. From pier-glasses and Lyonesse cushions, blue silk beds with white muslin curtains, from dainty silk petticoats, grey silk stockings, and pink silk clothes, from coquettish dressing-gowns trimmed with swans-down, and from ostrich feathers and Brussels lace he composes delicate bouquets of colour.

Le Prince, Fauray, Ollivier, Hilaire, and the two Swedes Lavreince and Roslin are further interpreters of worldly elegance. But in order to make the acquaintance of the Rococo in all its distinction one must also study the etchings. The preference for light, evanescent colour was especially conducive to this branch of art. Under Louis XIV. line engraving also had served the purpose of glorifying the king. The boastful pictures of the palace of Versailles and the portraits of the royal family and accounts of the court festivals were spread abroad in prints. Now engraving loses its courtly character and becomes a fancy article like all the products of the Rococo. Dainty books in fine morocco binding must lie upon the table; books intended not to be read, but to be examined during the leisure hours. Dainty duodecimo editions of the classic authors also appeared; Molière's comedies, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Boccaccio's novels, and La Fontaine's fables were published with spicy illustrations. Hubert Gravelot, Nicolas Cochin, and Charles Eisen furnished the illustrative material, spread extravagant grace on all sides, and enveloped even the classic authors with gallant charm.

But even fonder than of seeing gods and nymphs were men of beholding themselves in the mirror of art. And, since art had come to be nothing more than a reflection of life, in no period of art had portraiture such a significance as during the Rococo. Balls and promenades, the theatre and the salon—every social

event was caught by the etchers in prints which give back to us the entire *frou-frou* of the century. With the older artists the innocent, paradisiac sentiment of Watteau prevailed, and Arcadia was the ideal of the salon. Young women dream, mechanically turn over the leaves of a volume of music, or listen abstractedly to the words of a cavalier. From the later etchers, as from Saint Aubin's *Bal paré*, the jubilant *Evoe!* of joy is echoed. The rooms gleam in the light of Venetian chandeliers. Rosy cupids look down from the light walls, silken trains rustle, silken shoes skip about, fans are coquettishly shaken, diadems and necklaces sparkle and gleam. Slender cavaliers and young girls dance the gavotte with a teasing yet solemn grace; knights of Malta and abbés pay court to the ladies. The mirrors reflect the whole glittering picture.

Before the portraits of the eighteenth century one remains standing in the galleries with especial pleasure. Even little medallions, the works of unknown artists, have a discreet grace which disappeared from the world with the rise of democratic art. Certainly the Rococo is one-sided here also. There are no rugged, manly characters, for life did not produce them. The eighteenth century is the century of woman. She is the axis about which the world revolves; the most distinguished protectress of art, and its principal subject. There passes before us the whole company of young women with rosy complexions and gentle eyes,

in ample silk clothes, adorned with collars, or in half mythological garb; young girls who are innocence itself, and others less apparently so. An age which devoted itself to self-culture produced so many beauties that it seems to us, descendants of a later period, as if ugly women had not existed in the eighteenth century.

Jean Marc Nattier was the first to desert the style of Rigaud and paint the dainty instead of the dignified, the lovable instead of the proud. Although he probably had little insight into the character of his models—and such insight would hardly have been worth while—he has given them all an expression of unaffected distinction. He is especially at home in painting silk clothes, of caressing light shades of blue, grey, and green, and in pink tones. He had also a fine taste for pretty coiffures, for those simple wavy modes of dressing the hair which succeeded the majestic arrangement of the age of Louis XIV. In the application of beauty spots, and the wearing of pearls and delicate diadems, he was a past master. Often he painted the ladies in fragrant, transparent robes, through which a leg or breast peeped forth, and inscribed them *Diana* or *Musidora*.

Louis Tocqué, his stepson, carried to barbaric Russia something of the splendour of the Rococo, and Robert Tournières introduced the mode of medallions and of delicate miniature portraits. But far richer in consequence was the inspiration that came from a Venetian artist. Under Watteau's portraits we find

one of a lady upon a background of roses—Rosalba Carriera, whose beautiful name and rosy art he indicated by a symbol.

This lady played an important part in the history of art during the eighteenth century; for she invented pastel painting. The effect of oil painting was too heavy and material, too gloomy and solemn in the light rooms of the Rococo. Its oily and moist colours did not suit the fragrant-powder sentiment. They needed a technique which was as spiritual as the subjects; a technique that used the dust of flowers as colour and preserved the sensitive qualities of the butterfly's wing. For this reason Rosalba adopted pastel painting. Although her portraits are life-sized, they preserve the character of dainty jewels. She does not paint her ladies in dignified poses, but attempts to catch the nervous charm which lies in the turning of a corner of the mouth, a mocking glance of the eye, a dainty gesture, or a refined movement. Light silk robes rustle, dainty laces flutter and the perfume of tea-roses and flowers is wafted from the powdered hair.

Among Frenchmen Maurice Latour progressed further in the paths of Rosalba. All types of Rococo society—æsthetic abbés and gallant ministers, theatrical and real princesses, chamberlains, princes, and subtle marquises—file by in his pastels. His portrait of himself resembles Voltaire. A light, mocking smile plays about his mouth, and this sharp epigrammatic trait distinguished also his pastels from the soft

and charming productions of Rosalba. In keen, witty strokes, bold and sarcastic, he depicts a character. The ladies of the opera, those dancers who continue to live under the delightfully vague names of Mlle. Rosalie and Mlle. Silanie, gave the preference to Perronneau, in whose works they found a more graceful rendition of their beauty. The most celebrated of all was the Swiss Liotard, who made a triumphal progress through the world, from Naples to London, and from Paris to Constantinople.

#### V. Boucher

The Rococo was the first period which used the rustling of the toilette to heighten sensual charm. A piece of bare flesh, shimmering under a lace sleeve, no larger than was necessary to press the lips upon, seemed more piquant than statuesque nudity. As in this domain there were so many delicate discoveries to be made, historical painting had from the beginning to yield to genre-painting in the same proportion as taste preferred the small to the great. Jean Restout, Jean Raoux, Pierre Subleiras, Carle van Loo, Lagrenée, Jean François de Troy, Charles Antoine, and Noël Nicolas Coypel, the chief representatives of historical painting in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, still belonged to the school of Le Brun. At least, the same powerful and heavy forms remain and there does not live in their work that indefinable spark

ROSALBA CARRIERA



A LADY (PASTEL)

*Louvre*





which electrifies the beholder in the works of the Rococo. Only in their subjects the spirit of the Rococo is expressed, just as the Carracci had once depicted the subjects of the Counter-reformation in the language of form of the fifteenth century.

As in the days of Correggio and Sodoma, love stories were the only themes treated, and both Bible and mythology were used to furnish material to the *ars amandi*. Magdalen, for the Counter-reformation the penitent sinner, became again for the Rococo the spirit of attractive sin. A favourite subject was the theme *Lot and his Daughters* in which the relation of the Regent to the Duchess of Berry seemed personified. Seductive pursuits and gallant shepherd scenes were offered by the antique. Psyche is led by Zephyrus into the palace of Cupid, Vertumnus deludes Pomona, and Andromeda breaks the bonds of marital convention; Telemachus seeks his father lingering with the beautiful Calypso. Venus, the open-hearted spouse of Vulcan, is surrounded by a court of all her admirers. She coquettes with Adonis, Hermes, or Mars, receives the reward of the apple from Paris, and celebrates her relation with Bacchus—a hymn to wine and love. Dainty chambermaids costumed as graces serve her, cupids bearing flowers and silken bands hover in the air. Favourite subjects also were the love-adventures of Jupiter; how he approached Danae as a golden rain, Callisto as a satyr, and Europa as a bull; how Latona retired to the isle of Delos to give birth to her twins.

Neptune, ruler of the sea, plays an important part, because the bath has become the centre of refined pleasure for the Rococo. He is enthroned at the side of Amyone tritons and nereids swing and rock upon the waves. The artists are delighted to have passed the days of gloomy piety, and therefore paint the sun-god, progressing through the clouds upon his glittering waggon; leaving the abode of Thetis at morn, and returning to the palace of the goddess at even, after he had during the day pursued Daphne or done homage to Leucothea or Clytie. Even Hercules is a hero of the time, not indeed the giant who throttles Antæus, but Musagetus, leading like a dainty ballet-master the dances of the Muses, or the enamoured Phæacian sitting at the spinning-wheel of Omphale. Especially in this scene did the Rococo find a confirmation of its own philosophy of life: that even the heroes of antiquity passed their happiest hours in ladies' boudoirs. Other celebrated lovers. Angelica and Medor, or Rinaldo following the enchantress Armida to her island, frequently recur. The beautiful lady of the period considered herself a Dejanira when a marquis in the rôle of Nessus carried her off, and consoled herself with the deserted Ariadne or Dido, when, after a brief love-affair, her friend deserted her.

After these masters had depicted Rococo thoughts in the heavy forms and the showy colours of Le Brun, François Lemoyne led the Rococo to victory in form also, and gave to historical painting that trend to

freedom, lightness, and grace which genre-painting had received through Watteau. In place of the heavy red and blue, dainty rosy and light tones appear, and at the same time the dainty bodies of the Rococo ladies were no longer enveloped, as formerly, in a rustling silk dress. Lemoyne's figures have not the majestic movement and the rounded limbs of the preceding epoch, and no longer resemble the heroic massive female type of the Baroque. They have dainty, fragile bodies with piquant little heads and coquettish coiffures, with a fine sensual nose, soft arms, and long, graceful legs. Neither do they stand amidst mighty architecture or before heavy sweeping curtains, but, light and ethereal, in careless joy, they rock upon the clouds. Whether he calls them nymphs or graces, or unites the Muses, Diana, Flora, and Pandora in the *Apotheosis of Hercules*, they are all Parisian women of the Rococo, elegant and supple. A mischievous laughter, a mixture of innocence and corruption plays about their mouth. Before they sat as models their little waists had been laced in tight corsets and their legs encased in silk stockings. Paint and beauty-spots are not unknown to them, and, although they are antique goddesses, they know all the secrets of the toilette and the refinement which the marquises and opera beauties of the eighteenth century had brought into vogue. His Muses are as portrait-like as Falguière's statue of Cléo de Mérode.

Through Lemoyne historical painting thus attained

a new character. It became a new feature of the *ars amandi* to be painted as an antique love-pair. How unrestrainedly this was done is shown by the picture which the young Duc de Choiseul ordered in 1750 upon the occasion of his marriage to the daughter of the financier Crozat, in which he was depicted as Apollo descending to Clytie, the beautiful mortal.

Charles Natoire was the first to progress farther in these paths. His usual subjects are bacchic festivals, scenes from the story of Psyche, Galatea encircled by cupids, or the deserted Ariadne. Everything is light and rosy, corresponding perfectly with the light tone of the rooms and the silvery gleam of the ornaments.

François Boucher grasped all these threads in his hand and created an art which was an apotheosis of the Rococo. The carnival which had begun with a measured gavotte has now become a wild can-can. He paints no longer Watteau's minuet, but those so-called Babylonian dances which the *corps de ballet* of the Grand Opera performed before Louis XV. Crébillon, Bernard, and Grécourt in literature, Pompadour and du Barry upon the throne, find in him their artistic parallel.

In many respects his works are disappointing. He did not possess the delicacy peculiar to the best Rococo masters. At a later period Diderot called him a painter of marionettes, and this criticism touches Boucher's weakest point. His works are lacking in the psychic

charm which Watteau possessed to such a high degree; they have no soul, and therefore cannot speak to soul. A malicious smile, a tender infatuation, are the only sentiment reflected in these heads. Many as were the models who frequented his atelier, Boucher is seldom individual, and gives to his deities and nymphs something typical and empty which almost reminds us of a wax doll. In form and in colour also he is often cruder than the others. Crimson tones prevail in his carnations, and his intense blue sometimes has an almost gaudy effect. Especially are his works of his last years far from attaining the charming grace of the Rococo painters; the heads being grimacing and insipid, the bodies of an artificial elegance in their rounded softness. The pressure of work during the last years caused him to adopt a fixed pattern, and to strive after *chic* and external effect.

But just this pressure and the colossal number of his works, point out the exceptional position which he occupies within his epoch. The Rococo is an age rather of Phæacian enjoyment than of bold activity, rather of trifling dalliance than of serious work. The artists also are æsthetic lovers of pleasure with little of the energy of the preceding generation. In contrast to these over-refined epicures who early in life became *blasés* and were silent, Boucher appears to teem with health, although it was he who in later years was considered the genuine type of the man of the Rococo, whose existence was passed in sybaritic effeminacy.

He led the life of a *grand seigneur*, spent 50,000 francs a year, subsidised ballet dancers, and gave artistic fêtes to which the whole world of the stage flocked. He possessed an artistic collection containing goldsmith's work, bronzes, Japanese wood-engravings, and Chinese porcelains, besides pictures and drawings by almost all great masters. At the same time, however, he stands in the midst of this epicurean time as a powerful, able workman: a sort of Augustus the Strong, who was out of place in this effeminate epoch. The period of his activity covers half a century. Until very old age he sat daily ten hours at the easel, and under the government of Pompadour especially he was the man for everything. Every day he appeared in her palace to give her instruction in painting and look through her etchings. No court festival, no theatrical representation took place which he did not conduct. In addition to the rôle of the designer of the wardrobe he also had to play those of a paper-hanger, cabinet-maker, jeweller, and decorator. For the solution of such many-sided problems a dreamer like Watteau would not have been capable; it required a robust workman sure of whatever he undertook. As Boucher was this, he is lacking in the fine note of the Rococo, and appears like an artisan among artists. But as he alone still had the power of work possessed by the great men of the past, he was, notwithstanding this, the representative man of the epoch, and has, as its strongest and busiest master,

given the final bodily form to the spirit of the Rococo in all of its radiations.

Boucher's activity included everything. He once painted a picture for Mme. de Pompadour: little cupids making music, carving, building, etching, painting, and kneading in clay—a homage to the beautiful woman who, as a dilettante, was active in all domains of art. Such a magician was Boucher. He took part in everything that art produced to surround life with aristocratic splendour. He not only arranged the ballets and Japanese fêtes which took place in the house of Pompadour, but even designed the costumes for all the great ladies who appeared at the court, and for all the little dancers whom she summoned from the Opera. Landscape-gardening received through him a new character. In his designs *Diverses fontaines* we first meet with the rose-bowers and shell grottos which dominated the style for several decades; the fantastic cliffs from which the water spurts forth; chimæric monsters who dwelt with beautiful women in enchanted grottos. Next to Aurèle Meissonier, he was the great leader of applied art in France. Inexhaustible in invention, he furnished designs for sculptors, ivory carvers, goldsmiths, and carpenters; for paper, furniture, sedan chairs and bookbinding, fans and jewelry; he modelled porcelain figures and mantel decorations, vases and chandeliers.

As a painter he is devoted to no especial branch. Whether the problem is to paint easel-pictures or



decorations, wall or ceiling pictures, surportes, wagon doors, dainty miniatures or menus, oil paintings, etchings, or pastels—he furnishes everything. For the stage he designed curtains and scenery, gardens adorned with statues, grottos, and waterfalls, palaces with marble colonnades, and country dairies in hazy, blue landscapes. As director of the Gobelins' factory, he fixed the style of tapestries, and composed vases and garlands, shells and medallions into joyous fantastic designs. The number of chambers which he decorated for the king was colossal; the royal bedrooms in especial which were scattered throughout Paris were entirely Boucher's work. The palace of Bellevue which Pompadour built for herself owed to him its decoration.

And as he was technically the master of the most different branches of art, so his range of subjects knew no bounds. The man who could himself play the rôle of tailor and carpenter understood from its very foundations the furniture of the Rococo. Pictures from the elegant world form therefore the introduction to his works. When he designed his illustrations to Molière, he did not think of keeping them within the style of the seventeenth century; he forgot that these ladies wore high toupets and stiff corsets and moved about in Le Nôtre's gardens. He merely translated Molière into the Rococo, made him coquettishly young and amusing. Like Watteau, he is the leader of fashion who is always inventing new coiffures and new toilettes. The scene is laid at one time in the park,

then in the street, the boudoir, or the salon. The furniture is of bizarre elegance: the bed especially, a mighty four-poster, is hardly ever lacking in the background of his prints. He has similarly depicted in a series of pictures the aristocratic life of the Rococo. Here a young lady sits at her mirror and reflects where the beauty-spot which she wishes to apply will be most becoming; or she interrupts her toilette to interview a little milliner who is submitting Brussels lace for her inspection; or she stands at a window engaged in tying a rose-coloured love letter about the neck of a carrier pigeon; or in the winter season she is pushed over the ice in a chair-sleigh by her admirer, an elegant boia about her bare shoulders, and enveloped by snow-drops gleaming like featherdown. The Chinese also play an important part in his paintings, certainly little resembling actual Chinese, but all the more like the distinguished ladies and gentlemen who took part in Pompadour's Chinese mummeries.

As a portraitist he does not belong to the great psychologists. He painted few pictures which are at the same time interesting and a good likeness, like the head of a young girl in the Louvre. Yet he has in the picture of Pompadour created a work which reflects the spirit of the whole epoch. She sits in her workroom upon a couch, the piano is open, upon a tabourette lie pieces of music, some of which have slipped down and lie upon the floor beside the implements of painting. The great mirrors behind her

reflect the salon, the books, the library, and the cupids of the clock. One is really conducted into the workshop of an artist rather than in the boudoir of a mistress, and the picture is permeated by the spirit of an age which made even of love an art.

On account of his pastoral subjects he was celebrated as the Anacreon of painting. For surportes as well as for gobelins and etchings he used landscape views, and the scenes are more confidential and enamoured than with his predecessors. Here a young marquis, disguised as a shepherd, teaches his sweetheart to play the flute; there he bends over her, pressing a kiss upon her hair, and offers her a dovecote, a birdcage, or a Pandora's box; or they kiss each other through the mediation of a bunch of grapes, which he devours in rapturous ecstasy after they have been touched by the maiden's lips.

His cooks and peasants bring another shade into this love-play. It is idle to speak of intimate knowledge of folk-life in these paintings; for these are not peasant women who labour in the field with a hoe but such as a young marquis, tired of the salon, dreams of. After he has breathed the perfume of the distinguished ladies, he envies the grenadier his cook, the village youth his country beauty. For the marquise Boucher paints the sturdy country boys, for the elegant *roués* the maidens with brown arms and broad shoulders. In literature Jules Lemaitre (in his romance *Les rois*) has probably best depicted this sentiment of the age.

With this sentiment is also connected the fact that the countryfolk took such a prominent part in his landscapes. Although he shares with Watteau the love for green and blooming nature, no distinguished ladies and gentlemen recline upon the meadows. The wood is for him no Elysium but an ideal village seen with the eye of a gentleman of the salon, who for a change finds an especial charm in the odour of the stable. The dwellings are thatched peasants' huts; turtle-doves sit cooing upon the roof, chickens are busy upon the dunghill, brooks wind through the meadows past decaying bridges. Fishermen with their nets are catching trout, and especially neat washerwomen, their skirts tucked up high, bend over their work.

Even religious pictures occur among Boucher's works. For in Pompadour's residence provision was made for repentance as well as for love. The architect had not forgotten the palace chapel and Boucher had designed the necessary altar-pieces, with the same *chic* as he had the gauze costumes of the ballet dancers. Among his religious works are a *Birth of Christ*, an *Adoration of the Shepherds*, a *Sermon of John the Baptist*, and an *Assumption of Mary*. He is especially fond of painting the Christ-child and the infant John kissing each other—another evidence of the close relationship of the Rococo to the age of Leonardo, which had first used this motive.

But Boucher's especial domain is nude mythological figures. He was celebrated by contemporaries and

condemned by later generations as the "painter of the frivolous court of Cythera." When the name of Boucher is mentioned one thinks not of shepherds and *fêtes galantes*, but of pictures like the *Birth of Venus* in the Stockholm Museum. Tritons blow their shell horns and play with the fair-haired daughters of the sea, approaching upon the backs of friendly dolphins. In all positions the bodies caress and embrace each other, while cupids in the air wave a cloth like a fluttering banner of victory. The heaven gleams brightly, as if bathed in the perfume of roses; the bodies of the women arise bright and gleaming from the light blue waves. This picture means for Boucher what the *Embarkment for the Isle of Cythera* meant for Watteau. When Watteau appeared the pilgrimage was begun, but now its end has been attained. While his heroine is the lady in silken dress and Brussels lace who swings her dainty slipper over a world of cavaliers, Boucher's is Venus in person—likewise a Venus of the Rococo, not the terrible murdering goddess whom Racine depicted in *Phèdre*, but a courtesan of the grand style, a gay marquise who from the balcony of Olympus scatters fragrant roses through life.

The female nude was the dream of Boucher's life, and to honour it he set all Olympus in motion. Phœbus, Thetis, nymphs, naiads, and tritons rock softly in the waves and the ether; Apollo with his lyre sits upon the clouds; the Muses dance, and cupids forge the

FRANÇOIS BOUCHER



NEPTUNE AND AMYONE  
*Trianon, Versailles*



weapons of Vulcan. Here, in a bright blue fragrant landscape, Venus leaves her dove-chariot to descend to the bath. There the fair Europa is abducted by Zeus, but without being frightened; her playmates do not wail, but congratulate her on being the chosen one of his celestial majesty. Sometimes he paints the *Education of Cupid*, the *Abduction of Cephalus by Aurora*, or subjects like that strange picture in the Louvre, *Diana Ascending from the Bath*, in which he uses the motive of the cherry-harvest to display youthful bodies in the most varied movements. Fat-cheeked *putti* tumble about the clouds, triumphantly swing silken banners, shoot down arrows, and bind the hesitating with chains of roses.

If Watteau is the Giorgione, Boucher may be called the Correggio of the Rococo. Like Correggio, he was helpless in depicting manhood. All the men in his pictures are marionettes, who have no bones and are made of sawdust. With Correggio he shares the preference for fleshy cupids with enormous hips and the *haut goût* which pervades all his works. They naturally differ in composition and colour. While Correggio's composition was geometric, Boucher's work is pervaded by the dainty rhythm and the sparkling freedom of the Rococo. While Correggio, the son of the Renaissance, loves dark and golden tones, Boucher prefers pale, light silver, bluish-red scales. Whereas Correggio uses shadows and contrasts to emphasise his nudes, with Boucher everything, figures



as well as landscape, are bathed in carressing, vibrating light. Psychically also the difference in the epoch is evident. Correggio's quivering passion is replaced in Boucher by the love-sick antics of an old gentleman tapping a young girl under the chin.

Boucher's types of women are even younger than those of Lemoyne: early matured at the age of fourteen—types like the Irishwoman Murphy who succeeded Pompadour in the royal favour. The legs are tender and nervous, the waist is delicate, and the young, hardly rounded breast quite undeveloped. At first his wife, a seventeen-year-old Parisian, served as his model: then he found by his association with the opera the means of keeping his art ever young; for the *corps de ballet* was at that time very youthful, and only graceful and languishing bodies were popular. In the portrait which Lundberg painted, Boucher himself looks like a ballet-master; the head with the wavy wig has something triumphant and self-conscious. His eye gleams as if in fever, and his mouth is soft and sensual. His models were the most youthful and the freshest of figures. One can even observe how with increasing age he found a more subtle pleasure in seeking out quite childish, budding bodies. Likewise he was, as a true adventurer of love, impartial in his favours. As he painted robust cooks as well as ethereal marquises, so he never thought of confining himself to the elastic firmness of childish bodies, but proceeded from thin to fat, taking pleasure in flaccid

bodies and soft, fatty skin. He sometimes renders every feature of such corpulencies with such delight that it seems as if Rubens had come to life again.

### VI. The Painters of Frivolity

In this manner the development progressed. With the dainty and measured minuets of Watteau the ball had begun, at midnight under the leadership of Boucher they danced the can-can, and now at dawn the cotillon follows.

They had danced and loved too much. Instead of exerting themselves they now wished only to observe, as the pasha smoking opium sits apathetically in his harem. Even to have the ballet-girls dance no longer affords pleasure. Thus begins at the close of the Rococo the really gallant art—the living pictures. Sturdy fellows and pretty maidens of the people must enact for the distinguished gentlemen the love-scenes for which they have themselves become too *blasés*.

Pierre Antoine Baudouin is the first to tread this domain. His entire activity is devoted to the narration of gallant adventures. Here a young girl is willingly carried off; there an old gentleman takes pleasure in overhearing his beloved with a young gardener; there again confessionals are used for interesting conversations. The circumstance that in the narration of such episodes Baudouin never uses a large canvas and the heavy oil colours, but always a miniature form, and the

gouache technique is a proof of the never-failing tact which like a *force majeure* dominated this age.

But the cleverest of this group, and indeed one of the most refined artists of the century, is Fragonard, the subtle charmer, in whose works all the joy in life and light-heartedness, the whole grace of the Rococo is once more revealed. He painted everything. Next to his teacher Boucher, he was the most popular decorator who adorned the temples of the goddesses of beauty. Guimard as well as du Barry made use of his services, and although such works, torn from their environment, lose their most subtle charm, even from the fragments one can judge what clever and sparkling decorations Fragonard created: bizarre and coquettish in conception, light and delicate in tones. That in one of these works, the *Four World-Religions*, he places the Christian, Asiatic, American, and African side by side, in a setting of the purest Rococo style, is likewise characteristic for the spirit of the century.

Beside the decorator stands the landscape painter. Even in his youth, when a pensioner of the king in Italy, he drew very delicate landscapes: the ancient Roman villas in their mixture of grandeur and decay, black cypresses rigidly stretching their boughs to heaven, and bright white statues blinking from the green foliage. Later on he left Paris every summer for the country to portray in fresh pictures peasant life. Countrymen repose after the day's work, laundresses spread their linen upon the meadows, cows

and asses graze in a lonely field. Children especially are the heroes of these pastoral scenes; they make their little dogs dance, play with Polichinelle, or receive their supper from their mother.

His portraits have made him the admired favourite of modern Impressionists. It is hardly possible by simpler means or by any retouching or additions to concentrate more life and directness in one head. With Hals's bold presentation he combines the sparkling *frou-frou* of the Rococo. The toilettes are attuned to delicate greyish-red tones, and he grasps the most fleeting movements of figures and features. Actors especially were represented in his pictures: for they were the heroes of this age, which no longer loved and laboured but only played or had things presented.

Nevertheless one thinks not of such things when the name of Fragonard is mentioned, but of hoop-skirts, silken trimmings and short petticoats, swings revealing interesting grey stockings, fine cambric chemises gliding from rosy shoulders, of cupids kisses and love-play.

"Shortly after the close of the Salon exhibition in 1763," Fragonard himself relates, "a gentleman sent me an invitation to visit him. When I responded to his invitation he was in the country with his mistress. At first he overwhelmed me with praises of the picture I had exhibited, and then confessed that he wished another one by me, the idea of which he himself would give: 'I should like you to paint Madame in the swing. Place me so that I can see the pretty child's feet, or

even more if you wish to give me especial pleasure.' ” To this strange lover we owe the picture of *The Swing*, the first that shows the real Fragonard.

With this picture he found his mission and became the privileged master of this genre. All the gentlemen of court as well as those of the *haute finance* wished to have a Fragonard, and the artist was inexhaustible in his invention of piquant situations. He is certainly not a moral artist, but whoever judges works of art not by their subject but by their artistic value will nevertheless reckon him among the greatest masters; so much sparkling *verve*, so much spirit and dash is shown in all of his paintings. It is astonishing with what fine feeling he arranges his colours and by what simple means he expresses life and movement. From the circumstance that he, like Baudouin, always used water-colour, not oil, and never painted upon a large scale, every trivial realism is avoided and the character of the joyful *capriccio* is sustained.

Is it the mobile blood of the southern Frenchman (for Fragonard was a native of sunny Provence) which pulsates through his works, or did he labour so nervously and hastily because he himself felt that the days of joy were numbered? The carnival of the Rococo approaches its end; and Fragonard is the *Pierrot Lunaire*, skipping about pale and ghostlike at dawn. Many of his pictures, mad as they are, have something of the character of a prayer. Upon the altars smouldering flames rise towards heaven, and

pale mortals lay white wreaths at the feet of almighty Eros. Here women raise their hands beseechingly to Satan, praying him to reveal to them the secret of a new sensation; here a couple in mad haste rush to the fountain of love, and the youth drinks eagerly of the water which Cupid gives him. It is no accident that this was the time of spiritualism and wonderful elixirs; when distinguished gentleman became alchemists and locked themselves up in the laboratories in hopeless endeavour to discover the secrets of life and death; that the saints of this age were those charlatans who promised an elixir of life to weary, effete mortals. Fragonard's pleasure in sturdy children resembles what Wagner felt when he brewed the homunculus in his retort. It is no accident that pictures of prophets now became so popular; for all felt that the future concealed something gloomy. A light sentimentality, a mournful melancholy pervades Fragonard's last works. The roses, once so red, are grey as ashes. The joyous carnival of the Rococo was at an end, and Ash Wednesday had dawned with penance and fasting.

#### **VIII. The Pastoral Play, Bourgeois and Antique**

It is with the centuries as with individuals: when they approach their end, they hold inward communion and repent of the follies of their youth. So it had been at the close of the *quattrocento*, when the proud paganism of the Renaissance was followed by

the gloomy Counter-reformation; at the close of the seventeenth century, when the *Roi Soleil* paced from the magnificent halls of his palace to the confessional. For the eighteenth century the appearance of Rousseau had a similar significance.

At the middle of the century epicureanism had attained an unsurpassable refinement. All pleasures of life had been exhausted, and the moment had now come when, after the sparkling champagne, the desire for simple nourishment was awakened; when after over-refinement and frivolity men dreamed themselves back in a happy condition of simplicity and virtue. In the midst of the time of highest culture there appeared a man who branded this culture as worthless, and who, in contrast with the over-refinement and effeminacy which he saw about him, praised in glowing colours the primeval condition of the savage. As Tacitus extolled the ancient Germans to the Romans of the decadence, so Rousseau held up as an example to the aristocratic world of the eighteenth century the natural man, who in his virtue puts to shame the civilised man. Only where people have few wants and are honest, where under natural conditions natural men and women cling to each other in true love, is true happiness to be found. With tears in his eyes he depicts the life of the plain people; all those charms of quiet home life which the whirlpool of society had destroyed; those sweet cares for house and child, for garden and field, which, though cares, also afford

happiness. To these conditions of paradisiac innocence the aristocratic world must return; it must again learn from the people what it had lost in the current of over culture. Earnestly he advises mothers themselves to give the child its first nourishment, for only with mother's milk is filial love imbibed. He also exhorts people to piety. Voltaire, the Mephistopheles of the century, had only clever mockery for religion; Rousseau again substituted faith for doubt.

Voltaire ridiculed the apostle with these words: "After having read your work one feels inclined to walk on all fours. As I have been out of this habit for the last sixty years, I unfortunately feel that it is impossible for me to resume it; and I leave this natural locomotion to those who are more adapted to it than you and I." The rest of the world was inspired by Rousseau's writings, and ladies especially adopted the new ideas. Flirtations with æsthetic abbés had after a while become tiresome. They longed for new sensations, and Rousseau gratified this longing. It was so charming after having so long been fashionable ladies to play the rôle of mothers; so piquant to satisfy the wants of a child in the midst of brilliant social functions and adored by the eyes of cavaliers. The religious feeling also awoke. After free-thinking materialism, it seemed new and distinguished to do homage to sentimental religion. They had heretofore passed the time in idle pleasure; it now seemed to be demanded by good tone



to knit children's garments for charity bazars and to distribute cakes among handsome beggar boys from Savoy. These elegant women of the world sprinkled their heads with ashes and begged forgiveness for their former sins. They went into the homes of the poor, took the children in their arms, and loaded them with the strangest presents, with cast-off silken shawls and knitted silken purses. They knelt before the altar and took part in religious processions. The melody played upon the piano was no longer *scherzo vivace*, but sentimental. Religious concerts and Gluck's oratorios were produced at the Tuilleries. The orgies of the Palais Royal were inevitably followed by orgies of morality; the gallant pastoral plays by pastorals of virtue.

Diderot was the first to give to the thoughts of Rousseau a dramatic form. With his family dramas *L'ère de famille* and *L'innocente femme* he brought the *tragédie bourgeoise* and *comédie larmoyante* into fashion. As the public had formerly taken pleasure in the frivolous dramas of Cérillon and Grétry's comic operas, in *Zémire and Azor*, in *Aucassin and Nicolette*, they now listened with delight to these tearful dramas which in such a touching, edifying, and virtuous manner extolled the life of the middle classes. Even science was moved by the current. *La tendresse de Louis XIV. pour sa famille* was the theme of the prize composition offered in 1753 by the Academy of Sciences. Æsthetics followed the same paths. Art must not amuse

but improve, must create examples to encourage the good and warn against the evil. Only moral sculpture and painting could now be used. Every painting and every statue must express a great maxim and be a lesson for the beholder.

For the older artists this meant ruin. Boucher, in particular, the painter of graces and of the frivolous court of Cythera, felt bitterly the change in taste. In his portrait by the Swede Roslin in 1760 he is no longer a brilliant cavalier, the frequenter of the opera, whom Lundberg painted in 1743. Worn lines are written upon his countenance, and there is something uncertain and restless in his glance. Like a tiger, Diderot had pounced upon him: it was a disgrace still to be compelled to view pictures by a man who openly passed his life with prostitutes; who had lost all ideas of honesty and innocence, and who only lived in this virtuous epoch as a warning example against moral turpitude.

To these sentiments Greuze gave the artistic expression. While Boucher and Fragonard had catered to the piquant pleasures of aristocratic men of the world, the picture became in his hands a moral sermon. Like the philosopher and romancer, he proclaims the doctrine that pure unadorned tenderness lives only in the cottage, and that here alone can be found the life which makes men truly happy. Like Diderot's writings, his paintings show the intentional endeavour to excite moral emotion; they always contain the

practical application: *Hæc fabula docet*. As the aristocratic world after its orgies of sensuality had become sentimental and tearful, Greuze's life was a continuous triumphal procession. The whole age wept virtuous tears with him over the reward of the good and the punishment of the evil. The life of the people had been seldom portrayed in aristocratic France; for *la canaille* was a subject rather of ridicule than glorification. In his twelve etchings published under the title of *Cris de Paris*, Boucher had portrayed certain types of the great city—the peddler, the organ-grinder, the milk-woman; but they were curious beings who caused merriment when their harsh voices sounded from the street. Now, under the ægis of Rousseau's philosophy, the third estate enters art. Men discover that the Arcadia which had formerly been sought far off on Robinson Crusoe's island could also be found close at hand. They were charmed to be instructed about the honesty of the people, and were so tired of the perfume of the salons that they breathed with pleasure the odours of the dogs, cats, and chickens which shared without restraint the dwellings of these good people.

His first picture, the *Father of a Family Reading the Bible to his Children* (1755) made him a celebrated master. The entire aristocratic world pressed to see the work, because it seemed so new, after the clever atheism of the philosophers, to hear of the simple piety of such honest peasants. The numerous

JEAN BAPTISTE GREUZE



THE BROKEN PITCHER

*Louvre*



progeny here depicted also created a profound impression. Although the women of the Rococo had thought very lightly of the joys of motherhood, now, as is shown by the memoirs of Marmontel, the "little man" was also envied for his wealth in children. Like a biblical patriarch, he holds in Greuze's pictures his sceptre in the midst of a hundred descendants. The good great-grandfather and the worthy grandfather, both paternal and maternal, were still alive; and even the uncles, aunts, and cousins find a home in this model family, of which all the members cling to each other with devoted tenderness. Contrasted with the intimate family life of these people, all social pleasures seemed to these distinguished ladies dismal and constrained. They were no less astonished to see with what biblical solemnity all the other events are portrayed in these circles. An engagement with the aristocracy was an indifferent matter of business. A countess became engaged in order to receive additional homage as a young wife—a matter solved by signing the marriage contract and a formal kiss from her *fiancé*. But the common people still believed that marriage was a holy sacrament. In the picture of the *Country Betrothal* which Greuze exhibited in 1761, twelve people take part. With solemn gesture the father gives the dowry to his son-in-law, and with it wise advice, solemn rules to be followed upon the journey of life. Bashful and loving, the young girl links her arm with that of her lover, while the good mother

whispers comforting words in her ear. In awed astonishment, as if she were a superior being, the younger sisters gaze upon her.

"God speed you, dear Greuze! Remain moral, and when the moment of your death draws nigh there will be not one of your pictures of which you need think with repentance." With these words Diderot saluted Greuze's following picture, the *Paralytics*, when it appeared in the Salon in 1763. He here reveals the devoted care which, in accordance with the biblical command, the children of the *bourgeoisie* took of their parents. "Honour thy father and thy mother, that thy days may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee": such is the theme of the two pictures the *Father's Curse* and the *Punished Son*. Like an Olympian Zeus, the father thunders his paternal curse upon his erring son; his mother bursts into tears, and the younger children look tearfully and timidly upon the culprit. Time passes; and after he has found that only with a father's blessing can children prosper, the son returns repentant to his father's house. In the second picture he stands with quaking knees, like a beggar, on the paternal threshold to seek forgiveness; but it is too late, his father is dead. With a tragic gesture the mother points to the corpse, about which the sobbing children and grandchildren stand.

Greuze even intended to paint an entire romance of twenty-six pictures, treating, under the title *Baïle and Thibaut*, the influence of good and bad bringing-

up; it was to conclude with the condemnation of the murderer Thibaut by his friend the judge Bazile. This undertaking was never carried out; but in the next Salon he exhibited two pictures treating the theme of maternal duties in the spirit of Rousseau. A young mother gives her child to a nurse, and with hot tears on part of the whole family, the parting takes place. In the next picture the baby returns, a sturdy lad, into the house of his parents; but he does not recognise his mother and longs for his nurse. The moral, of course, was that only women who themselves practise the maternal duty can be sure of the love of their children.

The young mother occupied with her child was a favourite theme of Greuze. He painted her giving her baby the breast, or sitting at the cradle, full of tender thoughts, beside her husband. Indeed even when the theme is not young motherhood, he constantly points out that this is the mission of woman. The little girl plays with a doll; because care is to be taken that even in a baby a feeling of motherhood shall be awakened. She wears no deforming corset, in order that the bosom may fully develop. While the woman of the Rococo remained all her life a young girl, Greuze's women are already mothers. *La laitière* is the occasional title. A close psychological connection exists between the appearance of the young ladies and their rustic pleasure of milking the cows early in the morning. They are either fair or dark, and wear a blue or a



red band in their hair; their great brown eyes are pouting or foreboding. The effect, however, is always calculated upon the contrast between the bright, gleaming and childlike eyes which appear so innocent and inexperienced and the fully developed forms of ripe womanhood.

In Greuze's works Boucher's ideal of beauty has not become more innocent but more *raffiné*: with this difference, that even in such paintings Greuze remains a moral artist. The scene of a young girl offering doves to Cupid has always as a pendant Mary Magdalen, the repentant sinner, praying with the glance of a Niobe to heaven for forgiveness. He paints not the joys of sensuality, but the sorrow over lost innocence. The poor child whose jug is broken looks like a startled doe; the girl who has let her mirror fall looks perplexed and inconsolable upon the broken fragments. Robbed of all happiness in life and with tearful eyes, another child gazes upon its dead bird. "Think not," wrote Diderot, "that it is over the jug, the mirror, or the bird that they weep. These young girls bewail more, and well they may."

In this mixture of tearful morality and perverse racism Greuze is the true painter of his day. For one must not believe that this reformation was a deep one; the simplicity and virtue were only a show. It is true that the Trianon, Marie Antoinette's "little Vienna," presented externally a very rustic appearance. At the foot of a wooded hill, on the bank of a placid pond,

a row of peasants' houses extended. There was a farmhouse and a mill, a dairy and a dovecote; fishermen and washerwomen laboured in the vicinity. The ladies wore straw hats, which had become the fashion through the taste for pastoral scenes. Upon the meadows the king's children played as shepherds and shepherdesses with their sheep and goats. But in the interior of the Trianon it looked exactly as in the artificial village which the Prince of Condé had caused to be built in the park of Chantilly. There also were peasants' houses, a mill, a barn, a stable, and a village tavern; but none of the buildings actually served the purposes which its exterior announced. The inn contained a kitchen, the stable a library, the village tavern a billiard room, and the barn an elegant bed-chamber with two boudoirs. Likewise in the Trianon a whole building consisted of kitchens. There was a kitchen for cold dishes, another for the entremêts, a third for the entrées, a fourth for the ragoûts, a fifth for the roasts, a sixth for pastry, a seventh for tarts. Gentlemen could only appear in scarlet uniform with white, gold-embroidered vests. The barn served the purpose of a great ball-room. Sometimes, when they danced under a tent upon the sward, they took pleasure in summoning a couple of sturdy peasant boys from the neighbourhood that they might laugh over their awkward movements; but otherwise the placard *de par la reine* excluded from the park in its greatest extent every one who had not the right to appear at court.

Even the king could visit the queen at the Trianon by invitation only.

In other respects they held fast to all the prescriptions of etiquette. The levee of the queen still took place in the presence of the court ladies. Her court, comprising four hundred and ninety-six items, required a yearly outlay of 45,000,000 francs; the sum allowed for gambling was 300,000 francs, the sum for toilets 120,000, which, however, was usually exceeded by 140,000 francs. Her dignity required the purchase of twelve great robes of state, twelve fantastic costumes, and twelve parade costumes for each of the four seasons of the year. In a single year three hundred neckerchiefs for the queen were bought from a single modiste. The yearly salary of a hair-dresser of a great lady, Madame Matignon, was 240,000 francs. At that time the profession of the hair-dressers had become so important that in a memorial to the government they requested to be placed on the same social footing as the artists; for like the painter, the hair-dresser uses the "formative hand, his art demands genius and is therefore a free and liberal art." The coiffures, a yard high, were adorned with ostrich feathers and rubies. In a single year Marie Antoinette spent 700,000 francs for diamonds, and presented the dauphin with a waggon the wheels and ornaments of which consisted of gilded silver, rubies, and sapphires. The annual allowance for the candles used by the queen was 157,000 francs, and those which were not burnt

were assigned to a court lady, who acquired thereby a yearly income of 50,000 francs. And that morality, in spite of external appearances, had not improved, is evident from a remark of the *Journal des Modes*, that although Louis XVI. had no mistresses, others kept masters.

The same pretended naturalness, the same moral immorality exists in Greuze's pictures, in which there lives the virtuous, sentimental person as the closing eighteenth century dreamed him to be. Even the artificiality and the theatrical affectation of his pictures existed also in the spirit of the time. They thought they had achieved such great virtue that it must be proclaimed with declamatory pathos. They were so proud to have remembered the disinherited that they shed tears of commiseration over their own goodness of heart. In tones quite as unctuous and quite as rich in phrases as Greuze, authors wrote and statesmen spoke of the goodness of the people. All human life was to them a melodrama which ended with the victory of virtue and the punishment of vice. It was certainly a cruel irony of fate that history undertook the punishment in quite a different spirit; that all this rose-coloured dream of simplicity and innocence ended in blood; and that the "man of the people" in no wise revealed himself as gentle and pious as aristocratic society had conceived him to be.

This idealisation of the middle classes was followed by an antique pastoral play: for the longing for sim-

plicity was one of the most promising characteristics of the age. Endeavouring to reconcile Rousseau's ideal of simplicity of manners with the yearning for simple form, they turned from the Rococo to the Greeks, and dreamed themselves in that bucolic era when there had been neither powder, bodices nor crinolines, but the women moved about beautiful as goddesses, and men, syrinx in hand, rested beside their flocks. They had also become virtuous; for which reason they dressed their hair *à la Diane*. After the appearance of Abbé Barthélemy's *Voyage du jeune Anacharsis*, all Paris changed into Athens. There were no longer balls, but Anacreontic fêtes. The ladies' girdles were adorned with red figures upon a black ground in the style of Greek vase pictures; the gentlemen wore *bottes à la grecque*. From the dressmakers the fashion extended to the artist's studio. Architects began to study Vitruvius, and to give their buildings the serene beauty of line of the Greek temples. In 1755 Soufflot built the Pantheon, and in 1763 Grimm wrote: "For several years men have been looking for antique ornaments and forms. The preference for them is so general that everything is done *à la grecque*. The interior and the exterior of the houses, the furniture, the goldsmith's works—all bear the stamp of Greece." Even Diderot's love for the moral and pathetic picture, such as Greuze painted, was supplemented after 1760 with an inspiration for the antique. He gave lectures upon antique taste,

and demanded plastic beauty and pure simple line.

The last years of Marie Antoinette were the time of the climax for the antique pastoral play. She wished to become "natural," and found the models of this naturalness in the Greeks. Etiquette was therefore banished from the Trianon; she chose the harp as her favourite instrument, and prescribed a Grecian cut for her clothes. In a simple white muslin robe, a white kerchief tied loosely about her neck, a straw hat upon her head, and a cane in her hand, she wandered, accompanied only by a single servant, through the shady alleys of the Trianon. So great was her simplicity that the complaints over the queen's passion for dress were replaced by the wails of the merchants, that through this new fashion the industries of the land, and especially the silk trade of Lyons, were ruined.

Vien, who sought to give his pictures the appearance of antique gems, is the first of these followers of Anacreon, and the antique pastoral play is reflected even more delicately in the works of Madame Vigée-Lebrun. Her studio was during these years the artistic centre of Paris, where all the great men of diplomacy, literature, and the theatre met. It was more interesting to be portrayed by a young girl than by a dignified academician. The beautiful woman was treasured by these great men even more than the clever painter, Marie Antoinette also and the court ladies sat to her, and Mlle. Vigée used to paint them as goddesses,

muses, or sibyls. Later she married the rich art dealer Lebrun, and held in her house those æsthetic *soupers à la grecque*, which so finely illumine the whole epoch. "Everything—clothes, customs, food, pleasures, and table—was Athenian. Madame Lebrun herself was Aspasia, and Monsieur l'Abbé Barthélemy, in the Greek chiton with a laurel wreath upon his head, read a poem. Monsieur de Cubières as Memnon played upon a golden lyre, and young boys as slaves waited upon the table. The table itself was filled only with antique vessels, and all of the dishes were genuine Greek." To her marriage we are indebted also for her most beautiful pictures—those representing her with her little daughter. The example in the Louvre, especially, in which she sits embraced by her child, seems to be the conception of a divine moment. Just as many of the Tanagra figurines appear as if they had come directly from Paris, so here the soft grace of the Rococo is woven with Hellenic simplicity into a charming harmony. Such works are pervaded by the sentiment of a Theocritean age, which in its last moments warms itself in the sunshine of an ancient world of beauty and listens dreamily to the soft tones of the syrinx, while below already reverberates the rattle of the drums of a new age.

## Chapter VIII

### The Triumph of the Bourgeoisie

#### I. England

HOWEVER similar they seem externally, Greuze and Hogarth are direct antipodes. While in Greuze's work the old aristocratic art finds its last expression, in Hogarth's, for a second time in the history of art, the voice of the common people sounds. The threads which the Dutch had relinquished in the seventeenth century were taken up anew, and never again surrendered. In the seventeenth century Holland still formed an isolated domain of the *bourgeoisie* in the midst of the aristocratic world; but the prevalence of the monarchic principle was such that the art which had begun *bourgeois* ended courtly. Now the scale tips towards the common people. One piece after another falls off from the ancient aristocratic world; and one land after another assists in the foundation of the new temple, upon which we are building to-day. In the preparation of the great middle-class culture of the nineteenth century, England was called to be the *le der*. For even in the eighteenth century this was a relatively democratic country, and had carried



out the idea of the modern free state at a time when upon the continent the sultriness of the coming storm was hardly perceptible in the atmosphere. Despotic oppression had ceased to exist, and there was no chasm between the nobility and the middle classes. Every man was at liberty to shape his personality and fate after his own fashion.

A change such as the Restoration of 1660 brought about must have had a deep influence upon the moral formation of life. It seemed as if suddenly the prisons had been thrown open, and hordes of criminals swept over the country. The restraint of an earlier day was followed by an intoxication of viciousness and unbridled dissipation. In revelry and riot, with assault and murder, England celebrated the first years of its liberty. All London was full of pickpockets, robbers, and speculators, and gambling reached a dizzy height. English officials, grown rich in India, established oriental harems. The theatre also followed the trend of the time. The obscene comedies of Wycherley and Congreve have nothing in common with the dainty frivolity of the French plays. From them speaks the vulgar crudity of the plebeian who takes pleasure in wallowing in the mire. The menagerie of the passions was let loose, and in the enjoyment of liberty all morality was lost.

The problem of the education of this new race of men therefore arose. The wild years of youth should be followed by a settled manhood. As a free country

could not restrain the wild unchained flood of the popular spirit by police regulations, improvements had to be accomplished along pedagogical lines. In this manner can be best explained the deep moralising tone which henceforth runs through English intellectual life. Collier began by writing his book upon the immorality of the stage. As the dramas had formerly been coarse and vulgar, they now became moral and didactic. For Southerne as for Rowe, the stage is only a means of exhibiting in the clearest method possible a general rule of morals. In like manner Richard Steele regarded the press as a pulpit of moral improvement. In 1709 appeared the first number of the *Tatler*, in which he scourged gluttony and drunkenness, gambling and the abuse of married life. The *Tatler* was followed in 1711 by the *Spectator*, and this by the *Guardian*, which declared as its programme "to implant as deeply as possible religion and morals in the soul of man, to exhibit lofty examples of filial and parental duty,—to make vice hated and virtue attractive." Richardson founded the moralising family novel. Under the influence of these moralists a new spirit entered art. Art also, it was said, must take part in the problems of civilisation which the epoch presents, and the painter must become a portrayer of the morals of his day; the same programme which in the nineteenth century Proudhon announced in his book *Du principe de l'art et de sa destination sociale*.

Hogarth, therefore, is like Greuze a moral preacher.

He lingered where the crowd is thickest; in the coffee-house where the politicians, scholars, soldiers, merchants, and money-changers sit together, he was always to be found. In the morning he went to the Exchange, in the evening to the theatre, and he was never a silent observer but a judge. He paints, like Greuze, pictures to prove single paragraphs of the moral code; with this difference, that he presents his messages to a different public. Greuze did not attack vice, but awakened sentimental admiration for virtue. He uses the third estate as a mirror of virtue, whose noble qualities are exhibited for the edification of the aristocracy. Hogarth, on the other hand, scourges the vices of the third estate, in order to raise its own morality. He denounces and hurls thunderbolts at the excrescences of modern civilisation, and storms against drunkenness and libertinage. In contrast to France, where the life of the people only served to create a melodramatic pastoral play, in England the middle classes had already become a factor of intellectual life.

His sermons began with the six paintings for the *Harlot's Progress*. Mary Hackabout comes from the country to seek a position as a servant. She soon yields to the temptation, becomes the mistress of a Jewish banker, then the accomplice of a pickpocket, and finally ends in a house of prostitution. A second cycle, the *Rake's Progress*, treats in eight pictures the similar course of life of a young man. As a student in Oxford, he had promised marriage to a young girl.

when the death of a rich uncle drew him into the whirlpool of London life. As a favourite with women, a hero in sports, he went the way to ruin, but again recouped his finances by marriage with an elderly lady, whose money he gambled away, and he ended a mad-man in a debtor's prison. Only the love of his student days, Sarah Young, whom he had so cruelly deserted at Oxford, thought of her betrayer and visited him in the madhouse. The *Mariage à la mode* of 1745 is the acme of his moralizing activity. A lord loaded with debts married his son to the daughter of a rich shopkeeper of the city. After the birth of a little girl, each followed his own inclination, until the husband surprised the wife with a lover, by whom he was stabbed; and the young widow returned to the dulness of her father's house, to end her life by poison when she heard of her lover's execution. In his last series he devoted himself entirely to the cure of souls and to criminal subjects. The cycle of *Industry and Idleness* of 1747 includes twelve designs which were only published as line engravings and distributed as a weekly sermon to labourers. Two apprentices are at the same time indentured to a clothier. The diligent one marries the daughter of the proprietor, becomes alderman and lord mayor of London, while the lazy one, pursuing the opposite course, becomes a vagabond and a murderer. The two comrades meet for the last time when the good one pronounces the death sentence over his erring friend.

Whether art remains art when it descends to the level of pedagogical science is in itself a question; but the problem which Hogarth attempted he solved in a drastic manner. Since he did not, like Greuze, labour for fine marquises and dainty countesses, but for Englishmen, he could only attain his end by heavily underlining his thoughts. Indulgent consideration was out of place, and everything is applied with a coarse brush. While Greuze endeavoured to create a pleasant impression, Hogarth, like a sturdy policeman and a puritanical *bourgeois*, mercilessly swings the heavy club of morals over human beasts. He leaves no door open for sentimental repentance, but shows vice in all its coarseness, rolls it in the mud, and drags it to punishment. The wheel and the gallows tower in the background of all his works; and as the new, plebeian world required from art nothing further than weekly sermons, he was praised not only as an educator, but also as a great painter.

The two portrait-painters Reynolds and Gainsborough introduce us into the circles which conducted this popular education. Hogarth is the commoner, the bulldog, the incarnation of John Bull; they are the painters of distinguished gentlemen. The most celebrated men and the most beautiful women sat to them. But with all their distinction, it is even here evident that we are confronting the people of a new era. The French portraits represent affable and refined ministers, gallant and dainty archbishops, perfumed and

charming marquises, who move with elegant lightness upon the floor of the ball-room, whose wide brow is never saddened by a serious thought. All are joyful and fond of life and of an enervating, effeminate elegance; they have the stereotyped smile of an educated politeness upon their lips, and the faded delicate faces of men who live more in the salon than in the open air: whose costly toilette is not made for the hunt and sport, for wind and weather; who never move about on foot but only in the carriage or sedan chair. Even with the French *bourgeoisie*, clothing and bearing are thoroughly aristocratic; they ape the distinguished, smiling, powdered, and affected air of the marquise. The very scholars deny their profession. They are never represented in the professor's chair or in their study, lecturing or working with book or pen at hand, but have the faces of diplomats and mouths wreathed with an obliging smile; they wish to appear not as specialists but as polished men of the world.

In England, during the same period, a great rise of literature and the drama commenced. Burke had written his essay *On the Sublime and the Beautiful*, Sterne, *Tristram Shandy* and the *Sentimental Journey*, Johnson, his *Dictionary*, Fielding, the *History of Tom Jones*, Smollett, *Peregrine Pickle*; Richardson, the author of *Clarissa Harlowe*, had reached the acme of his popular descriptions, Oliver Goldsmith had completed the *Vicar of Wakefield*, and Gibbon was writing his *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*; Garrick, the

actor, was at the height of his fame. Pictures of such writers and artists predominate among Reynolds's and Gainsborough's portraits. They are no diplomats, but sit at the work-table. One plunges his pen into the ink, another, who is short-sighted, holds his book close under his nose. His hands are uncared for, his toilette neglected. But one sees thoughtful, expressive heads: men whose brows show deep reflection over all the problems which the new age had called forth.

Parliamentarians, rich merchants, weather-beaten sea-bears, clergymen, and soldiers are also represented; and they too in no wise resemble the pale aristocrats of the *ancien régime*, but are a race more coarsely built and with less delicate features: many of the faces are even red and puffed, with round noses and eyes of cool determination; and the sturdy attitude is full of self-conscious dignity and coarse-grained pride. Here stands a general, coarse, fleshy, and broad shouldered, with a red, butcher's face, a brutal man of power; there a clergyman, short and sturdy, with rosy cheeks and energetic glance. In none of them does one encounter an affable smile, finely cut nostrils, white hands, and dainty elegance. If along with the middle classes rugged country squires occasionally appear, they too possess something of this coarse, full-blooded power of life. The garments of simple dark cloth which have replaced velvet and silk also announce the dawn of a new era.

The women, notwithstanding all their elegance, have

SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS



PORTRAIT OF DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON

*National Gallery, London*





nothing in common with the Frenchwomen of the eighteenth century. The French aristocratic lady lived in the salon, and sat for her portrait in the toilette which she wore at the ball or in the theatre, set off by the dazzling light of candles. In Gainsborough's portrait, Mrs. Siddons is represented in street costume, a great hat upon her head, muff in hand, and no pearls but a simple band of silk about her neck. Thus the ladies who endeavoured to make an art of life are followed by the actresses, and these actresses have already become great ladies. Her forehead is high and broad, and the earnest eyes, with the brows severely drawn together, announce the progress of women during the following century. While with the French the predominant trait is still worldly joy and a soft sensuality, we already find here the intelligent emancipated woman, prepared to be the rival of man in all branches of intellectual activity. Even the character of the pose is characteristic; there the attitude of the lady of the castle who makes no visits but only receives, here that of the lady who has just come from the street from a short visit with a friend.

For other portraits it is characteristic that the scene is never laid in the city, but usually in the country. Sport, reading, and country life—things which the Frenchwoman did not yet know—are the leading motives of these pictures. The lady sits in the park of her country estate under lofty trees and dreams with a novel upon her knee; not perfumed, but fresh and

dainty, her hair breathing the fragrance of the woods and her face shaded by a broad straw hat. Her hand glides mechanically over the back of a great St. Bernard lying at her feet. Sometimes she looks up to watch the games of her children, for in contrast to the Frenchwomen, she always conducts their education. Rejoicing in their romps with a little dog, they dash across the turf towards her. The mother takes the youngest daughter, kisses her and arranges her hair, dishevelled by the wind. In France the boys are already little gentlemen, the girls little ladies who strut with solemn mien at the side of their nurse. Their costly clothing, their powdered hair, admits of no romping. Their movements are measured and elegant, not of unconscious childishness, but of that studied grace which the minuet demands.

In England there was such no "corset education." The babies are true children of nature, who, unfettered as the wind, romp about the woods. They fetch their mother to go to the chicken-coop with them to feed the poultry; or they clap their hands and rush towards her when she returns from her ride, whip in hand, leading the horse by the bridle. If the French portraits are suffused in the close air of the salon, these breathe the pure country air, the fragrance of the meadows and the woods. The landscape, also, in which they move, has nothing in common with the French. While the park style of Le Nôtre shows the sovereign will regulating and directing everything,

the English style of gardening, corresponding to the taste of a free people, leaves nature unrestrained, except that it ennobles her and softens her wildness, just as the cultured classes sought to transform the wild, natural man into a well-bred *bourgeois*.

With Gainsborough this English element is even more clearly expressed than with Reynolds; for Reynolds, the thinker and the brooder, did not regard his models with a quite unprejudiced eye, but saw them through the medium of the older masters. Like the Italians of the seventeenth century he loved to represent his sitters in mythological or historical costume: as when he painted the actress Mrs. Siddons as St. Cecilia, and the actor Garrick between the allegorical figures of Tragedy and Comedy. In colour and pose also he sought to impart to his sitters a resemblance to the men of the Renaissance, a sort of typical, classical air. The pictures of Gainsborough are purely the expression of an Englishman. They are attuned not to the warm brown tones of the old masters, but to a light greenish, blue scale. Though not radiant with the splendour of the Renaissance, they yet possess the fine native flavour which is to-day characteristic of the English school.

The two painters also differ in this respect, that Reynolds, when he had no portrait sitters, painted historical pictures, Gainsborough landscapes. But while the historical paintings of the President of the Academy (the *Death of Dido*, the *Continence of Scipio*,

*Cupid and Venus*) point back to the seventeenth century, Gainsborough is justly celebrated as the predecessor of the great landscape painters of the nineteenth century.

Literature had proceeded along these paths. As early as 1727, when Le Nôtre still dominated taste in France, Thomson's *Spring* had appeared, in which the author sings of cosy and idyllic forest shades, of the brightness of the meadows, of the green exuberance of the English soil and the song of the birds. Gainsborough translated Thomson into painting. Along with Wilson, the imitator of Claude Lorrain, he ranks as the earliest English landscape painter. His native town, Sudbury, lies in the midst of the fresh, green English nature. Little brooks flow through softly rolling country; wide meadows alternate with smiling valleys and enclosed parks, where stags and does are at pasture, approaching curiously when the train rushes past. Fragrant lindens rise dreamily in the soft park-like landscape, through which like a silver ribbon the Stour winds. Here Gainsborough wandered as a lad, and what he learned to love in his youth, he painted later. His landscapes do not possess dramatic grandeur and are not stages for pastoral plays, but a romping-place for children and a place of repose for the herds. High trees stretch their branches protectingly over lonely cottages, before whose doors little children play, or a peasant returns from the woods with his bundle of fagots. Dark green stretches of turf

and waving fields of wheat extend to view: goats, with their young, graze upon the meadow. There is in his works the glad feeling of the inhabitant of the city who comes from the dirt of London into the fresh, green country. Through pictures like these England became the home of "intimate" landscape painting, that delicate, refined, modest art, which only the life of a great city could produce. Both in literature and in art England had shown the other nations the way.

### **11. The Enlightenment**

Beginning with the middle of the eighteenth century, the English influence fructified the Continent. There also war was declared upon the past; in all domains of intellectual life new conditions were sought; and the rise of the middle classes began. Naturally this emancipation could not be accomplished in peaceful repose. All the struggles which England had experienced in the seventeenth century had to be fought out afresh upon the continent. The second half of the eighteenth century, therefore, signifies for their people the stormy time in which the old and the new were separated.

In literature Germany assumed the leadership. As formerly the German courts had taken pride in being little copies of Versailles, so now the simplicity and naturalness of English customs became the fashion. The epoch of August the Strong and Countess Königs-marck was immediately followed by an age to which

good, honest, moral Gellert gave the tone. Of English authors Smollett, Sterne, Richardson, and Goldsmith found a wide vogue. In contrast to the custom of allowing only princes and generals the right of tragic dignity, the drama now assumed a *bourgeois* character. In place of treating only kings and statesmen, the scene of tragedies began to be laid in middle-class circles; and with the predominance of the *bourgeoisie* sober, didactic, and easily understood presentation came also from England to Germany.

Then a further change of scene, and the age of philistine moralising was followed by one of wild geniality. After the spiritual horizon had been widened, an actuality was revealed to them which had nothing in common with what they had dreamed about. They longed to escape from the pedantic, the artificial, and the social hierarchy, to the "brooks and sources of life." They wished to begin anew, raved about primeval men, and sought to resemble them in power and daring boldness. They took delight in mad stories and wild rides, in skating parties and wild hunts by night. Instead of silken shoes, they wore topboots; they peopled the German woods with bards and Druids, and dreamed of Gothic cathedrals and knights with mailed fists. The gentle race of writers was followed by a warlike one, which wished with blood and iron to form a new world. In 1774 appeared Goethe's *Werther*, a love story, but at the same time a manifestation of a young Titan whose cry for freedom burst all social

GAINSBOROUGH



PORTRAIT OF MRS. SIDDONS  
*National Gallery, London*





barriers. Soon afterwards came Schiller, with those youthful works which seem a declaration of war against the existing order. The angrily rising lion with the inscription *In tyrannos* which serves as a title-page to the second edition of *Die Räuber* is the innermost expression of the sentiment which inflamed the age. With sharp emphasis *Fiesco* is entitled a "republican tragedy"; and *Kabale und Liebe* attacks at the very core the rottenness of its day.

The feeling for landscape also experiences a change. The same love of nature which in England prompted Thomson's *Seasons* also found expression in Germany. In 1749 Kleist wrote his *Frühling*; and Haller extolled the natural grandeur of the Alps, and conducted the reader into the caverns of the cliffs and lonely forests where no ray of light gleams through the dark pines. Even richer in consequence was the influence of Rousseau, with whom a new epoch of the love of nature begins for the Continent. He does not grow enthusiastic over artificial country scenes such as Boucher and Fragonard painted; those landscapes with dovecotes and windmills, with cascades, dairies, thatched cottages in which the aristocratic ladies, weary of Le Nôtre's park, milked cows in silken shepherd's garb. He praised the majesty of lonely nature untouched by the hand of man; the grandeur of towering cliffs and raging waterfalls; he spoke of gloomy cloud-wrapped mountains covered with firs, of the glitter of sunbeams upon icy mountain-tops, and of dewy, fresh woods in

which the birds twitter. If for the old aristocratic generations the landscape was only a background for the social pleasures of life, it is now treasured for its sublime solitude. Instead of the soft zephyr men loved rushing wind, instead of bucolic repose the wild raging of the elements. Many of the landscape descriptions in Goethe's *Werther* are of a modern delicacy, as if he were describing pictures of Dupré, Corot, or Daubigny.

But if one seeks the works of art which the period of geniuses in German literature produces, the result is an extremely meagre one. This heroic age for the historian of literature is a desert for the historian of art. Nor is this an accident. For while literature prepares new ages, art can only rise upon the basis of a quiet, well-rounded culture. In *bourgeois* Holland and England it attained development not during the struggles, but only after culture had attained a fixed character. In Germany the age without art lasted longer, because here, even more than in England, the new culture assumed a specifically literary character. It was Schiller's "ink-splashing" century, in which literature attracted all powers into its service. The whole world hearkened to the words of the author: the book became the companion of man, and art found justification in a new world only as far as it served literature. As in England Hogarth is a part of the great literary movement, so in Germany Daniel Chodowiecke owes his fate solely to the circumstance

that he dedicated his clever burin to the service of authors.

After Lessing created in *Minna von Barnhelm* the first middle-class drama, Chodowiecke attempted to become the illustrator of the German *bourgeoisie*. At a time when no one took a walk without a book in his pocket, he found his mission in the illustration of the great German authors. It is true that he has nothing of the spirit of the great writers. "Honest Chodowiecke" Goethe usually calls him, and this is the only possible characterisation. At bottom he is a thorough philistine, as honest and talkative as he is commonplace and sober—a genuine type of that Berlinism which was represented in contemporary literature by Nicolai, lived once more at a later period with Krüger, and in the works of Menzel came very near to genius. He treats his themes in a broad and generally comprehensible way. The more an author is genial, honest, and clear, the more congenially Chodowiecke illustrates him. He loves good and gentle Gellert better than clever Lessing; Gleim, Campe, and Kotzebue are more congenial to him than Bürger, Mathison, and Wieland. In this honest common-sense his works reflect only the age of enlightenment, not the higher inspiration of the "storm and stress" period. One of his finest prints shows him sitting at the window, in the cosy circle of his family, engaged in drawing. The centre of the living-room is the sofa, and around the table before it the family is united. This appreciation of the cosiness

of German family life is the characteristic feature of his friendly, good-humoured, and harmless art.

Beside the illustrations for classical writers the portrait alone plays a rôle, and in this also one can see the gradual surrender of the patronage of art by the aristocracy to the *bourgeoisie*. Antoine Pesne, a Parisian, who was director of the Academy at Berlin, is still a type of the court painter. But although he is occupied almost exclusively with the aristocracy, even these portraits surprise the beholder by a certain massive and coarse element, forming a striking contrast to the light coquetry and rosy softness of the Rococo. Both the countenance and the costumes are serious: for Pesne is the painter of a court which does homage to the view that the king is only the first servant of the state.

Balthasar Denner of Hamburg was the first portrait-painter of the rising common people; of those circles which as yet had no relation to art, but demanded of a picture the most common-place, exact reproduction of reality. In accordance with these wishes he adopted a manner like that of Gerard Dou. Every wrinkle, every fold of the skin is carefully drawn, every hair of the head, every gleam of the plush cap is conscientiously noted and the whole is so smooth that nothing can be seen of the brush-work, and the picture has the appearance of a porcelain panel.

A series of other portraits reflects the spiritual rise of Germany; for the so-called "temples of friendship" are

characteristic of this age of enlightenment. As early as 1745 Gleim had begun at Halberstadt to collect the portraits of celebrated Germans. Somewhat later Philipp Erasmus Reich, the owner of Weidmann's bookstore in Leipzig, who had, as a publisher, come into contact with the celebrated men of his day, began that collection of portraits which is at the present time in possession of the university library of Leipzig. Anton Graff was destined to become the historian of this epoch. As Chodowiecke illustrated the classic writers, Graff portrayed them: and his portraits were spread among the people by means of Bause's line engravings. His subjects included Gellert and Bodmer, Gessner and Herder, Wieland and Lessing, Schiller and Bürger, Weisse and Rabenar among writers and poets; Sulzer and Mendelssohn among the philosophers; Iffland and Corona Schröter among the actors; Ramler, Lippert, and Hagedorn among scholars; and he thus gave to the literary lights of the eighteenth century the features by which they are now known. Even more than in the authors' portraits by Reynolds the purely spiritual element of the new age is reflected in those of Graff. There are no accessories, and he rarely paints his subjects in full figure, concentrating his efforts upon the heads with their mighty thoughtful brows. The eyes which gaze upon us have no longer time for the minuet or dances on the green, but they have read Kant's *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*.

Outside of the illustrations of clever artists and their

portraits, the new world had for the present no need of art. A meagre result was achieved by Wilhelm Tischbein's picture of Conradin in the spirit of Bodmer's ballad. It is more pleasant to read Goethe's wonderful landscape descriptions in *Werther* than to see the pictures of contemporary landscape-painters. It is indeed a very characteristic trait that this was the time of that literary landscape painting which Lessing at a later period combated in his *Laocoön*. Written landscapes were preferred to the painted, and the literary were only valued from the literary standpoint or on account of an interesting subject. Salomon Gessner amused himself by representing in etchings the idyllic places which he praised in his poems. Philipp Hackert became the Chodowiecke of landscape painting, and with solemn and honest objectivity related to German burghers how beautiful Italy looked. The animal-painter Elias Riedinger gained applause by the zoölogical exactitude with which in his engravings he perpetuated dogs and horses, stags and does, elephants and hippopotami. Not yet capable of enjoying with the eye, men valued painting only in so far as it furnished food for the mind. In this icy world of thought beauty was compelled to perish. After man had eaten the fruit of the tree of knowledge, he was driven from the paradise of art.

### III. The Passing of Beauty

There was a single city in Europe into which as

yet nothing of all these struggles had penetrated, and where at a time when artistic culture had been elsewhere destroyed the ancient aristocratic art experienced a delicate aftergrowth. At all times decades behind the general artistic development, Venice in the eighteenth century remained true to the habit. Having for so long been the bulwark of the church, she now became worldly and frivolous, graceful and mirthful, peopled no longer by black-robed ecclesiastics, but by shepherds clad in rose and pale blue. In Favretto's picture *Upon the Piazzetta* a gaily-coloured, elegant crowd promenades upon the smooth marble pavement, before the Loggia with its light-coloured marble columns and gleaming metal-work. They chat, look through their lorgnettes, and chivalrously salute the goddess of beauty. Such was the Venice of the Goldoni, Gozzi, and Casanova; the magic city radiant with ancient splendour, which, at a time when people elsewhere already wore horn spectacles and coats of black cloth, still celebrated its Rococo in feverish, festal joy, with song and coquetry.

Giambattista Piazzetta was the first to leave the paths of the old religious art. His Madonnas are only characterised as such by their names, and are in truth young mothers dallying with a child. Most of his works are pictures of young girls of that seductive age when the dainty little feet are covered with the first long dress; who dream, pout, laugh, and glance innocently yet fearfully into the world. He never knew



variations. This type of the young girl recurs with the artists who followed. Peasants, youthful dealers in game, and flower-girls are represented in the paintings of Domenico Maiotto, Francesco Guaranna, and Antonio Chiozzotto. In no wise resembling the fat women in the market-place, Piazzetta's maidens, with their rosy lips and slender movements, are young ladies who have for a change disguised themselves as country or flower girls. Rotari is the finest interpreter of this budding maidenhood. He has portrayed these pretty children in all situations; asleep over a book and teased by a youthful swain; dreaming over their sewing of kings' sons in the fairy tales, or as gypsies turning the heads of old men. Pietro Longhi thereupon wrote the entire chronicle of Venice. For centuries the Venetian gentlewomen had been condemned to a life as secluded as that of an oriental harem, the secrets of which no painter's eye had seen. Now the portals were thrown open and the *gentildonna* had become a lady of the world, the attraction of an æsthetic salon. Longhi mastered the figure of the Venetian patrician woman, and did not leave it until he had told everything about her, from the levee until the return from the ball. He followed her everywhere—into the bed-chamber, the boudoir, upon the promenade, in the gambling-halls, to the fortune-tellers, to the Ridotto—and narrated his observations with more objectivity than *esprit*.

The spirit of the age took the most characteristic

form in the works of Tiepolo. He is the prince, the radiant god of light of the Venice which arose like an enchanted island in an artistic world.

Tiepolo painted everything and is a stranger to no subject, to no technique. Just at that time a great building activity developed in Venice. Baldassare Longhena, Cominelli, and their pupils created those Baroque buildings which at the present day give the city of the lagoons its fantastic, glittering character: the façade a wild conglomeration of hermæ and atlantes, of columns and cartouches, the interiors bare and empty. Tiepolo's activity consisted in filling this interior space with the sunshine of his bright radiant art. In the church of the Jesuits in Venice he painted the *Distribution of the Rosary by St. Dominic*; in the church of Santa Maria della Pietà, the *Triumph of Faith*; in the church of the Scalzi, the legend of the *Angels Bearing the House of Mary to Loreto*. In Palazzo Rezzonico the *Triumph of the Sun God* is treated, and in Palazzo Labia a theme of the decline of the Roman republic: the *Banquet* and the *Departure of Cleopatra*. He laboured not only for Venice but also for the neighbouring cities. The Villa Valmarana near Vicenza he decorated with scenes from Homer, Virgil, Ariosto, and Tasso; the Palazzo Clerici in Milan with the *Apotheosis of Apollo*; the Palazzo Canossa in Verona with the *Triumph of Hercules*; the archiepiscopal palace in Udine with the *Fall of Lucifer*. Nor was his activity confined to Italy, but extended to Catholic Southern

Germany and to Spain. Beginning in 1750, he painted the decorations of the palace at Würzburg: in the hall of the stairway the representation of the four quarters of the earth doing homage to the duchy of Franconia; in the imperial hall a scene from the glorious past of the city: the marriage of Frederick Barbarossa in 1156 with the beautiful Beatrice of Burgundy, and the emperor creating the bishop of Würzburg temporal lord of the duchy of Franconia. In the royal palace at Madrid he painted for the hall of the body guard the *Smithy of Vulcan*, for the entrance hall an *Apotheosis of Spain*, and for the throne-room the *Spanish Provinces*.

But little is accomplished by enumerating the subjects of his works. Tiepolo's art is no wall-didacticism but decorative music reverberating in jubilant accords through the halls. One gazes upon distant palaces and sun-bathed landscapes, and into the heavens' wide æther. In wild, mænadic ecstasy angels and geniuses soar through space, singing, laughing, and tumbling over each other. Young knights upon white steeds gallop past with waving banners in their hands, *loggie* supported by columns and adorned with baldachins, stairways, and terraces arise; festally clothed men look down from balustrades, at the musicians playing below. Servants, among whom are Nubians in gay oriental costume, come and go. Yellow Egyptian women seated upon elephants with gold-studded trappings, pilgrims to Mecca, Moors riding upon

GIVOANNI BATTISTA TIEPOLO



MARTYRDOM OF ST. AGATHA

*Berlin Gallery*



camels, Arabs, Persians, Turks, Indians, and American gold-seekers march past. Chinese episodes also occur: Chinese tea-parties and Japanese temples, Chinese men and women walking in solemn dignity under red parasols. Pegasus storms through the æther, and a pyramid is erected in the midst of the clouds. All ages and zones come to the meeting-place; gods, mortals, and cupids, tropical plants, birds, and gay banners are arranged in fairy pictures of a fabulous and exotic splendour.

He ranks with Veronese as the greatest Venetian decorator, as the heir, user, and squanderer of an ancient culture. The tremendous ability of a mighty artistic ancestry is revived in this frivolous child of the eighteenth century; but he uses it for the expression of quite new ideas. Veronese's art was a daughter of the sixteenth century, clear, serene, and classic; of rigid composition and carefully considered geometrical lines. Tiepolo sings in no majestic stanzas, but bold, sparkling songs. The rhythm and repose of Veronese is replaced in his work by freedom, nonchalance, and nervous moods. The Venetian spirit, then so solemn, has become a subtle juggler, lies, leaps, and dances caprioles. All heaviness has disappeared: deprived of all corporality, the figures soar through the clear silvery æther. All the past masters of perspective, Mantegna, Melozzo, Correggio, and Pater Pozzo, appear, clumsy and struggling compared with Tiepolo. He is the aptest of the apt, a man who again and again pre-

pare new fêtes upon this earth; a prestidigitator whose hand, as if in a logical reflex, follows every flash of his eye.

But he is even more than this. These frescoes form only a part of his enormous life-work. In addition to his decorations, his etchings and oil paintings must also be considered. His etchings, the *Capriccios* and the *Scherzi di fantasia*, cannot be described in words. They are a witches' sabbath of magic fantasy and oriental enchantment. Here beside an antique sarcophagus an old magician conjures a snake; there one sits upon a pagan gravestone, burning a skull; another leaning against an altar of Dionysus thoughtfully examines a skeleton, while a maiden is caressing a satyr. Even in these works the black and white figures seem radiant with glowing sunlight. His oil paintings reveal him from another side. The novelty does not consist in the subject; for Tiepolo, unlike Piazzetta and Longhi, seldom painted scenes from modern life. Most of his easel-pictures are altar-pieces: visions, martyrdoms, and conceptions, in which cruelty is mingled with hysterical sensuality and Catholic mysticism. Dead eyes stare hopelessly at us, pale lips murmur prayers, and wan hands are raised aloft to the Cross. It is no accident that in Venice alone, even at the close of the eighteenth century, these ancient subjects of the Counter-reformation recur. But what an indescribable pathological refinement Tiepolo has given them! How in the Berlin picture he has transformed

the ancient theme of the *Martyrdom of Agatha* to suit the nerves of the Rococo! As a colourist he loves only light, dainty, pale harmonies, such as one would expect from the son of the eighteenth century. He softens and subdues the colour, and delights in soft, fading combinations, in the gloomy black, delicate white, and pale, refined rose and lilac *nuances*. To him alone belongs this female type of exquisite sensuality and oriental dreaminess, of pale, dark-eyed weariness and trembling joy in life.

It is not certain whether Tiepolo was descended from the ancient, noble house of that name, which for several centuries bestowed upon the republic of St. Mark doges, procurators, and military heroes. But so great is his horror of everything common-place and plebeian that one loves to think of him as a descendant of an ancient and noble house. As the last child but one of an aged father, he passed his youth under the guardianship of his mother, and the aristocratic dandy soon became the favourite of women. This explains the feminine trend in his character, the morbid delicacy of feeling with which he expresses feminine charms. In contrast to the earlier Venetians who loved a royal, powerful, and animal beauty, Tiepolo, the abstracter of the quintessences, plucked pale tea-roses of enchanting fragrance. As Beaudelaire relates: "Two women were introduced to me, one obnoxious in her healthfulness, without carriage or expression, in short, simple nature; the other one of those beauties



who dominate and oppress the memory; who make their toilette contribute to their deep individual charm; mistresses of their bearing, conscious rulers of themselves; with a voice like a well-tuned instrument and glances which only express what they wish." Thus Tiepolo also loved, not the healthy, but a morbid autumnal, fading beauty; a volcano in whose interior glowing lava seethes; the charm of *La dame aux camelias*.

He seldom assigns to the charming brown maiden of the people the rôle of the Madonna, but usually depicts as his saints ladies of the highest circles; pale countesses with tired laughter and with wonderful white hands, who know the excitement of gambling and all the sensations of an over-refined love. His perception of movement and gesture is as sharp as his rendition of the play of countenance. In the sixteenth century movements were round and majestic, in the seventeenth exaggerated and pathetic; but an almost imperceptible crook of the finger, a shrug of the shoulders, a quick turn of the head is sufficient for Tiepolo. Quite indescribable is the charming grace with which his ladies raise the train of their stiff, brocaded dresses. Only the descendant of ancient, over-refined culture which required many centuries to prepare could have such a refined sense for delicate shadings.

But even for this ancient culture the grave had been prepared. Tiepolo's activity signifies only the "passing of beauty." It is no accident that his finest works

treat themes of the Roman decline; for the same time had come for Venice. The odour of decay, the livid atmosphere of a sultry but pale autumn day pervades his works. They are the products not only of an ancient but of an over-ripe and decayed culture, and as in the days of the Germanic invasion, the world once more needed barbarians.

For two decades after Tiepolo's eyes closed in Madrid, the death-struggle of ancient Venetian art continued with unflagging joyfulness to the last. The two Canaletti, Antonio and Bernardo, came to complete the death-mask of the queen of the Adriatic; they painted the noble beauty of Venetian architecture, the fantastic splendour of the churches, and the weather-beaten grandeur of the palaces. Francesco Guardi arose to depict the glowing light that spreads over the lagoons. Gondolas, adorned with wreaths, glide fairylike, as in the days of Carpaccio, over the green canals, and the columns and balconies, the arches and loggias of marble palaces are reflected in the waves. Strange embassies move in gala splendour over St. Mark's Square, saluted by the proud Venetian nobility. Everything is as of old, except that it is seen no longer with the eye of a realist but with that of a romanticist. For when Guardi's last works were created, the empire of the Doges had already fallen.

Even the pillars of the royal palace in Madrid, where Tiepolo, the aristocrat, created his latest works, were shaken by the democratic spirit of the age.

Strange figures, mocking and threatening, appeared under the windows of the Alcazar. Spain, the land of blind piety, had ceased to believe, laughed over the Inquisition, and no longer trembled at threats of the punishment of hell. Indeed, it is one of the ironies of the world's history that precisely here, in the most mediæval land of Europe, the storm-bird of the revolution appeared. An art which was aristocratic and knightly and more Catholic than Catholicism was followed by the greatest possible reaction in the works of Goya. A wild plebeian, in whose mind gloomy thoughts of freedom revolved, crept into the walls of the Alcazar, where a little before the refined Tiepolo had dwelt. A skeptic who believed in nothing painted the walls of churches which had once been decorated by Zurbaran; a stiff-necked peasant lad became the portraitist of a royal house whose court painter had been Don Diego Velasquez.

Goya painted the most varied subjects. His religious frescoes are parodies of Tiepolo. Beautiful women look down coquettishly from the ceiling and angels, with challenging laughter, display their legs. His portraits of maidens, especially the celebrated double picture of the clothed and nude *Maja*, belong to the finest studies of the century. In other pictures he has depicted with powerful brush-work scenes from popular life: processions, bull-fights, beggars, and brigands. But however seductive he may be when charmed by his model, he is no painter. His pictures

GOYA Y LUCIENTES



LA MAJA

*Academy of San Fernando, Madrid*



are rapidly observed and rapidly executed, without artistic love or refined feeling. He is a revolutionist, an agitator, a nihilist.

Even in his portraits of the royal family these opinions are betrayed. He seems to laugh over the pompous nothingness that stood before him, and to be chagrined at having to paint the noble ladies and gentlemen in such solemn poses, instead of letting them disport themselves and jump over balustrades as did his angels. All of his pictures have a hopelessly plebeian quality. This son of a revolutionary age deprived the poor princes who were his sitters of the talisman of majesty and displayed them stripped before the eye of the world.

His etchings reveal the true Goya. Only in such prints, not in oil paintings, could his wild fire, his harsh, stormy spirit find expression. A mad, uncanny fantasy is everywhere revealed. Witches ride upon broomsticks and white cats; woman tear out the teeth of executed criminals; robbers scuffle with demons and dwarfs. A dead man arises from the grave and writes with his finger the word *Nada*. But the prevailing note is his hatred of tyrants. Nothing which had formerly been considered authority escapes his scorn. In the *Capriccios* he attacks with raving fury the kings and magnates, and scoffs at the priest's robe concealing human passions. In *Los desastres de la guerra* he contrasts the military glory which his predecessors had celebrated with the bloody ruin which is the price of

glory. Everywhere he struggles with cutting irony against despotism and hypocrisy, against the vanity of the great and the servility of the small; heaping all vices of the time into a horrible hecatomb. In his works there sounds the suppressed rumbling of the revolution whose crater had in the meanwhile opened.

#### IV. Revolution and Empire

In glancing at the French etchings of the decades following 1770 and 1780 or wandering through the gardens laid out about this time, one perceptibly feels how the coming events cast their shadows before them. The feeling of the end of the world is there. Men embrace and weep tears of friendship; they feel that they have little time left to see the light of the sun. Therefore nature seems to them so touching, so holy and beautiful; but they do not see life in her—only a mighty grave. Their enthusiasm for nature is accompanied by thoughts of death and floods of tears. At the beginning of the century, in the time of festive joy, men fancied Chinese summer-houses; then, when they believed that by a return to virtue and idyllic simplicity, the ruin might be averted, cottages, dairies, and temples of virtue were erected. Now that the dark care had come, they named their country places *Sanssouci*; laid out island cemeteries with mausoleums, and placed urns with tear-cloths in them. Mournful is the rustle of the poplars whose foliage shades the grave; weeping willows bend down their branches,

and inscriptions point to the changefulness of the earthly. In etchings as well as in gardens the ruins play the most important part. Men were attracted by the crumbling, the old, and the fallen, as if they were conscious that an old civilisation would soon fall. In an impressive illustrated work, Moreau's *Monument de costume*, the old aristocratic society relinquishes its heritage, desiring before the parting to leave to the world a reflection of its beauty. Even the conception of colour experiences a change. The favourite colour of the epoch is the *bleu mourant* which is generally used for clothes, as well the walls and the floors of the dwellings. Or else black, the colour of mourning, is preferred; and not only is the furniture, formerly so light, black as ebony, but black silhouettes replace the coloured miniature portraits of the Rococo. So much like ghosts, so doomed to the realm of shades people see themselves, that they have themselves portrayed in shadowy outlines. They had too long closed their eyes against what was happening. Blind-man's buff has now become a play of ghosts, and the gloomy feeling of the approaching end is reflected in everything. The toilettes are changed after the pattern of democratic English and American costumes and every one has the best intention to become democratic. But it is too late.

In 1789 the die was cast. *Après nous le déluge*, so lightly spoken by the Marquise de Pompadour, had become a solemn truth. The perpetual motion which



had begun its course one hundred and fifty years earlier in England rolled like a great avalanche over the soil of France. Gloomy and confused as the raging of the storm roar the peals of *Ça ira* and the Marseillaise—sounds which tore all Europe out of its grooves. The troubled and the heavy-laden, the beggars and cripples, once painted by the Master of the *Triumph of Death* in the Pisan Camposanto as begging in vain for the advent of Death, have themselves seized his sickle. From their caves and huts, from cellars and attic windows they rush forth like raging wolves; hollow-eyed, ragged, dirty, with empty stomachs and thirsty throats, the disinherited, the people, *la canaille*. Like a band of witches and demons, like spirits spying out the earth, they storm forward waving red flags, torches, and pikes; red caps upon their heads, armed with knives and clubs, with flails and hoes. They tear up stones and clods of earth, they press into park, palace, and salon. The Megæras of the Revolution, fishwives and market-women, transformed into raving Bacchantes, force open doors with crowbars and ignite the silken decorations. The walls re-echo with rude language, with curses and shrieks. They drink from bottles, and make costly glasses of Murano clink so that the pieces fly. Plebeian orators prate like ancient Roman tribunes of freedom and brotherhood. Then comes a procession of masks. Hideous fellows with shaggy hair, dressed as Roman lictors, drag in triumph a blood-stained

machine with gleaming blade, and test upon rabbits the sharpness of its steel. For their philanthropy, extolled by Greuze, the aristocratic ladies and gentlemen are rewarded with the guillotine. The last tableau of their pastoral play is the elegant bow with which they offer their neck to the knife. The device of the Regent, *Vive la joie*, is followed by another, *Vive la mort*. Marie Antoinette, her hair cut short, clad in a rough linen garb, rides amidst the jeers of the people upon the hangman's cart to the place of execution. The execution of aristocrats has become for the people what the gladiatorial games were for the Roman emperors. Among those who witness the drama is a young captain, who, armed with letters of recommendation to Robespierre and Danton, has come from a small southern garrison to Paris, and who, gazing upon the guillotine, has already wonderful thoughts in his pale head, thoughts to be realised later at Austerlitz and Jena, in the imperial coronation and the burning of Moscow.

Men lived in the atmosphere of antiquity; for after the destruction of royalty the Roman republic had become their ideal. The mighty *senatus populusque Romanus* again lived in the inscription R. F., which now adorned the public buildings. Upon the walls stood the busts of the great citizens of Rome, the elder and younger Brutus, Scipio, Seneca, Cato, and Cincinnatus. The Brutus who killed Cæsar was especially the hero of the hour, and the tyrannicides Harmodius and Aristo-

giton were immortalised—as were the ancient heroes who had died for their country and served their people by heroic deeds: Curtius, Leonidas, Mucius Scævola, and Timoleon. No longer the psalms and gospels, but Livy and Tacitus were cited by preachers in the pulpit. The Roman heroes of Corneille seemed to have left the stage and now stood in new forms upon the stage of life. Men addressed each other as Romans and gave Roman names to their children. The Jacobins went about *sans culottes*, in Phrygian caps, and later the “head of Titus” came into fashion. Women and girls bound sandals about their feet and dressed their hair in Grecian knots. Clad in white clothes, with no ornament but the virtue of simplicity, they appeared in the President’s office to sacrifice their treasures, as had the Roman women at the time of Camillus, upon the altar of the fatherland.

Art also had to submit to this framing; indeed, it did not even wait for the events. Even before the catastrophe had occurred, at a time when the Revolution knocked almost imperceptibly at the gate of the king’s palace, art had accepted it. Writers had drawn parallels between the institutions of ancient and modern states, and had endeavoured to prove that the ancient republics were models of absolute perfection, which should be imitated as closely as possible; they had contrasted the moral conditions of Sparta and Rome with those of monarchic France. The painters followed. The Roman art of the Revolution has nothing

in common with the Hellenic art of Madame Vigée-Lebrun. It is now all over with golden dreams and Theocritean idylls, with charms, courtly delicacy, and clever play. The demand is for rude Spartan virtue, and heroism is identified with beauty. As in democratic England, art was robbed of her diadem and converted into the handmaiden of patriotism. "Not by pleasing the eye," so it was said in the session of the jury of the Salon of 1781, "do works of art accomplish their purpose. The demand now is for examples of heroism and civic virtues which will electrify the soul of the people and arouse in them devotion to the fatherland."

He who uttered these words was Jacques Louis David. He was the first to animate the antique lines of his teacher Vien with republican pathos and to adapt painting to the heroism of the day; by which he became the great herald of the age that read Plutarch and transformed an aristocratic Capua into a democratic Sparta. His very first pictures, the *Oath of the Horatii* and *Brutus*, painted at Rome in 1784, were the heralds of the Revolution. To a new puritanic race, to whom the soft aristocratic art of the Rococo seemed a slander upon all rights of men, he showed the heroes who died for an idea or for the fatherland, giving them a mighty muscular development like that of a gladiator rushing into the arena. Art received through him the martial pose of patriotism. The whole domain of the antique became a *salle d'armes*, where nude prætorians exer-

cised in the poses of fencing-masters. And the more pathetically his heroes showed their heroism the more men saw in them a picture of the French people; for this exaggerated declamation was also in the spirit of the time. Talma excited the admiration of the people by playing in a classic style *Les Horaces* of Corneille. Robespierre is said to have spoken upon the tribune in a slow, scanning, and artistic manner, and to have moved over the volcano smouldering at his feet as if he had been a Bossuet in the pulpit or a Boileau in the professor's chair. Corresponding to this are the severe composition and the stiff rhetoric of David's pictures. If the overthrown society of the *ancien régime* had done away with all form, young France now required even of painted objects the severest discipline. If in the time of Sybaritism rhythmic lines and gentle movement had prevailed, now the puritans will only tolerate the stiff rigidity and movements like those of soldiers on parade.

David's ability as an artist and his close connection with the era of the Revolution is revealed even more in his works in which, disregarding a translation into the antique, he depicted what he had himself experienced or directly observed. Two pictures in especial, *Lepelletier upon his Deathbed* and the *Murdered Marat*, are works of mighty naturalism, cruel documents of that troubled age. Himself a radical revolutionist, he was also destined to become the portrait painter of the mighty race which had the courage to begin

JACQUES LOUIS DAVID



LEONIDAS AT THERMOPYLÆ

*Louvre*



civilisation and found religion anew; these men of Cato-like severity and these women with the proud, free glance. A characteristic example is the portrait of Barrère, standing upon the tribune and delivering the oration which cost Louis XVI. his life; his glance cold and hard and his mouth twitching with bitter hate; furthermore the portrait of Madame Récamier in its puritanic simplicity, in the severe rooms with the bare walls—a genuine product of that epoch which would tolerate only hard, merciless lines, and which introduced even into the ladies' boudoir its ideas of Spartan asceticism; and finally the portrait of Bonaparte, the execution of which is the turning-point in David's career.

In a sitting of a few moments he outlined the cadaverous bronze head of the Corsican; and afterwards he, the first painter of the republic, was named imperial court painter. As under Robespierre, so under Napoleon he was a dictator, and his artistic power, his style remained the same. As the men of the Revolution considered themselves Roman republicans, so Napoleon felt himself a Roman Cæsar. David could therefore feel the events without changing as an artist. His *Coronation of the Empress Josephine* of 1804 is a typical picture of rigid, solemn severity. His portraits of the Emperor, the Pope, Murat, and Cardinal Caprara symbolise the brutal greatness of an epoch which worshipped power. He occasionally approaches the themes of Rococo painters in such subjects as the



celebrated lovers of antiquity; but even in such works he remained a son of the Empire, and his cooing lovers are not doves but eagles.

Not until a later period, after France had relinquished its antique Roman predilections and the connection of classicism with life became looser, there entered into David's works a certain dry, archæological, cold, and calculating element. French art thus returned to its starting-point: for since the beginning it had been dominated by a mathematical spirit. Poussin composed pictures as if he wished to prove geometric theorems, and even the Rococo, by way of change, only turned its mathematics upside down. For all its apparent freedom, its asymmetry is only a reversed rule which by means of grotesque flourishes assumes the appearance of freedom. Every line is as coolly calculated as is every motion of the body in the minuet. After artists had exhausted the possibilities of deviating from rules, they returned to the old paths, from flourishes to the mathematically regular, from the unsymmetrical to the straight-lined, from the capricious to the statuesque. David was the first to unite antique statues into pictures, and painting became for him a geometrical problem regulated by fixed rules. These principles he impressed upon his pupils. Belisarius and Telemachus, Achilles and Priam, Socrates and Hercules, Phædra and Electra, Diana and Endymion—such are almost the only subjects treated with stiff classical exactitude by such pupils as Girodet, Guérin,

Jean Baptiste Regnault, and François André Vincent.

But one artist held aloof. Prudhon is distinguished from the mass of learned artists by his delicate and refined poetic qualities. While the others with sober intellectuality constructed pictures of antique fragments of form, Prudhon really bore the gods of Greece in his heart, and without troubling himself about academic formulas felt as a Grecian. Under his hand the antique arose anew in dreamy beauty, in the spirit of his own modern sentiment and of the great masters of the Renaissance, who had awakened it to life three centuries earlier. Even as a colourist Prudhon held an exceptional position among masters of his time. While with the others colour had to yield to rigid line, Prudhon possessed the soft light and shade, the tender *morbidezza* of the Lombards.

Even the hasty sketches with which he supported himself during his youth, vignettes for letter paper, visiting-cards, invitations to balls, and pictures for bonbonnières, are richer in poetry than the pretentious compositions of David's pupils. They unite French grace with the beauty of line of antique gems. His celebrated picture of 1808, *Justice and Vengeance Pursuing Crime*, is from the standpoint of colour the most clever achievement of French classicism. In his endeavour to render the tone and the softness of flesh in the most dainty manner possible, Prudhon sought for an illumination which would increase the clearness of the nude body, and found it in the hour when moon-

light spreads its silver rays over the earth. While nature lies in colourless twilight, the wan paleness of the human body seems to have absorbed all light and to radiate it. In a lonely and deserted place the murderer leaves his victim, the nude body of a youth over which the moon pours its ghostlike rays; but over him, like cloud pictures, hover the avenging divinities. In his other works Prudhon was more interested in the joyful, veiled myths of antiquity. He to whom love had given little happiness, rose upon the wings of art into the domain of fabulous love. In the evening twilight Psyche is borne by Zephyrus to Eros's nuptial couch; or she descends to the bath in a still mountain lake and gazes astonished at her own picture in the gleaming mirror; or she is visited by dreamy geniuses in the cool shade of the wood in the shimmering moonlight.

These pictures of Prudhon have even been compared with Correggio's, but the difference is greater than the resemblance. Not only in the rigid draughtsmanship of the Empire does Prudhon differ from the elder painter, but in his sad and dreamy melancholy. Correggio knew nothing of the pale moonlight gliding over snowy bodies, or of the soft longing which pulsates through all the works of Prudhon. The laughter of his goddesses, so sweet and seductive, is changed with Prudhon into smiles amid tears. He and David are sons of the same epoch, and have both seen the guillotine. David painted the Plutonic spirit of ter-

rorism and felt like Hercules cleaning the Augean stables. When he made his appearance, the Mar-seillaise sounded majestically through the land, proclaiming the fall of all Bastilles and of all thrones, the deliverance of mankind from the bonds of servitude. Men hoped for a time when freedom and virtue should reign, when all men should be Gracchi, all women Cornelias. But Prudhon lived to see that all these dreams only awakened the beast in man. Freedom was followed by a reign of terror and this by universal despotism. He had seen men whom he loved die under the axe of the executioner, and had heard the wings of the death-angel rustle over the earth. Through all his works runs the elegiac question "Why?"—something like the sound of a death-knell or of subdued tears. His brow is furrowed, his cheek is pale, and his eye dimmed by a veil of tears. An unspeakable pain is mingled with the sweetness of his smile.

And yet another thing he bewails: the world of beauty which democracy had destroyed. David was a man of the new epoch, and placed his art at the service of a young, democratic race. Prudhon, although younger than he, still belongs in character to the old order of things. He is not crude and democratic like David, but appears in his portrait aristocratic and refined, pale and pampered. In his youth he revered Fragonard and Greuze, and dreams of beauty filled his mind. Now all that was passed:

the smoke of powder had gathered between past and present. In the white salons which had formerly been flooded by the light of Venetian chandeliers, the pale moonlight shone. Dust has gathered in the corners; the gold of the ornaments has crumbled off; the gobelins are frayed at the bottom; the ceiling-paintings are pale, the roses dry, and the silken tapestry has been eaten by mice. Spiders weave their webs over the ivory fans; the old sofas shake upon their curved golden legs. The cultivated race of aristocracy has been followed by citizens to whom art is strange. Army contractors, speculators of the exchange, and corn usurers surround themselves with the treasures which the impoverished noble families have sold. Prudhon, the spiritual relative of Madame Lebrun, thinks sadly of past days: he is a master of the Rococo in the garb of the Empire; a son of the ancient aristocratic world, who has survived like a phantom into the democratic century. If he so frequently paints the tender Psyche borne by Zephyrus into the Elysian fields, it seems as if he thought of his own art which found no more room upon the rude earth.

#### **V. Classicism in Germany**

Although Germany experienced no revolution, it followed similar artistic paths, and this is to be explained by other, by scientific reasons. Men's minds were occupied by the excavations of Herculaneum and Pompeii; the ruins of Pæstum had

FRAGONARD



THE SWING

*Wallace Collection, London*



been explored; Greek vases were made known by Hamilton, and Roman monuments by Piranesi. In 1762 Stuart and Revett's great work on the antiquities of Athens appeared, and in 1764 Winckelmann wrote his *History of Ancient Art*. Winckelmann's whole artistic activity was a hymn to the recently discovered antique art. Poetry followed; for after the inspired wildness of the "storm and stress" period it was a natural reaction to praise the measured beauty of Greek art as the highest attainable. Goethe, the author of *Werther* and *Götz* was transformed into the poet of *Iphigenie*, and Schiller, who had written *Die Räuber*, became the singer of the gods of Greece. In consequence of this antiquarian current, painting also was guided into a direction similar to that which had been caused by the Revolution in France. Its development is henceforth determined by the paths upon which literature, the prevailing intellectual factor, moved. Indeed, painting so far relinquished its independence as to accept its rules from authors. While earlier authors like Vasari, van Mander, and Sandrart, who were themselves artists, had only followed the modest aim of giving to later times notes on art and artists scholars now put forth the claim to direct the paths of art and sit in judgment upon its achievements. For the æsthetics of that day did not find its aim in discovering what was beautiful in works of art, but wished to tell the artist how he must create them. And as the scholar who is destitute of a creative vein



can only conceive of the beautiful in the form of some already existing beauty, their instruction consisted in recommending to the artist the imitation of an older and greater epoch, and chiefly the Hellenic.

Although independent works of art cannot originate in this way, it was nevertheless, compared with the inartistic age of enlightenment, a gain for culture that the age once more attempted to enter into relation with art. The authors not only considered themselves the teachers of the artists, but were also concerned with the æsthetic education of the citizen. The new middle-class society could only attain art by educating its taste on the model of the great civilisation of the past; and the new art could only be maintained by leaning upon the art of the great epochs of the past. Even before the scholars began to participate, the artists had themselves sought to enter into such relations to ancient art, some by imitating the Dutch, others by following the Bolognese. The great artists brought system into this planless search by pointing to the age in which they saw the realisation of the highest ideal of an æsthetic culture, and they followed in this a carefully considered plan of instruction. The eye of the German *bourgeois* would not yet have been receptive to delicacies and caprices of colour. His taste could best be formed by pictures composed in accordance with the simplest and severest laws and which were drawn in rigid plastic outlines. The circumstance that all the young German painters took up

their residence in Rome shows clearly how unsuitable for artistic creation the soil of their home seemed to them.

It was in Dresden, the classic home of the German Rococo, that the movement began. Nine years before the appearance of his *History of Ancient Art*, in 1755, Winckelmann published his first treatise, *Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works*, the content of which culminated in this statement: "The only way for us to become great and possibly inimitable is to imitate the ancients." As the new German art which had gradually risen after the upheaval of the "storm and stress" period needed a staff upon which it could lean, the teaching of Winckelmann became the gospel of the epoch. "By studying the works of Greek sculptors the painter can attain the sublimest conceptions of beauty, and learn what must be added to nature in order to give to the imitation dignity and propriety," says Salomon Gessner in 1759. In 1766 Lessing wrote his *Laocoön*, in which, like Winckelmann, he recommended Greek sculpture as the ideal to be imitated. In like manner Goethe taught that Greek art was an absolutely exemplary model from which a fixed canon determinative for the artists of all times could be derived; and that the composition of pictures should correspond strictly with the style of the antique relief.

A few opposed this Hellenic programme. "Every land has its individual art, like its climate and its landscape, like its food and drink," says Heine in his

*Ardingbello*. "It is high treason to maintain that the Greeks cannot be surpassed," wrote Klopstock. At a later period Madame de Staël in her book on Germany wrote: "If at the present day the fine arts should be confined to the simplicity of the ancients, we could never attain the original power which distinguishes them, and the deep and complex sentiment which exists with us would be lost. With the modern simplicity would easily become affectation, whereas with the ancients it was full of life." The sharpest dissent was expressed by Herder in his *Viertes kritisches Wäldchen*: "The sculptor indeed cannot render morning and evening, lightning and thunder, brook and flame, but why should this be denied to the painter? What other law exists for painting than to reflect the great picture of nature with all of its phenomena? And with what charm she does this! They are not wise who scorn landscape painting and forbid it to the artist. It is as much as to say that a painter should be no painter, but should carve statues with his brush! Certainly, the Greek monuments shine like beacon lights in the sea of time; but they should be only friends and not commanders. Painting is a magic panel, as extensive as the world, in which every figure certainly cannot be a statue. Otherwise a feeble monotony of long-shanked, straight-nosed Greek figures will result. Affectation will prevent us from depicting our own age and the most fruitful subjects of history, and all feeling of individual truth and certainty will be lost."

But these voices were isolated. Winckelmann had no sooner indicated the aim, than Anton Rafael Mengs put the teachings of his friend into practice. This master, who reposes in the Pantheon by the side of Raphael, was an artist of persistent will-power, and he devoted his whole life to guiding young German art to the grandeur of the antique. His earliest works were rooted in an ancient courtly culture; for he had begun at the court of Dresden with pastel portraits which were quite in line with the taste of the Rococo and re-echoed its last achievements. He had also painted oil portraits, as distinguished in their delicate grey tone as they were powerful in their directness; which were in no respect either hazy or insipid. But in his large altar-pieces he remembered the mission which his father had assigned him in his cradle when he christened him with the given names of Allegri and Santi—that is to say, he makes the impression of a pupil of the Caracci. In his need of leaning upon an ancient epoch, he sought in the spirit of the Bolognese to give his pictures the style of the *cinquecento*, the serene flowing line of Raphael and the light and shade of Correggio. But in his *Parnassus* of the Villa Albani he has gone back to the original source: the imitator of the *cinquecentisti* has become the pupil of Winckelmann and the Greeks. The picture has been called a depot of plastic wares, a collection of painted statues; and it is true that in its cold correctness it seems to be the labour rather of a scholar than a

painter. In the manner in which he endeavours by means of scholarship to discover the essence of art, Mengs is the true contemporary of Winckelmann. The difference is not only an external one; instead of perspective effects, gobelins nailed fast to the ceiling; instead of figures hovering to and fro, a mathematically calculated composition; instead of painting, sculpture. The difference consists in this, that from Tiepolo's work a great, freely creating artist speaks, while Mengs is only the amanuensis of the scholar. Whatever is good in his pictures is due to his courtly and realistic past. The colour preserves a certain nobility; the line is as sure as that of an old master; and even the faces, notwithstanding their Greek profiles, are free from an idealised generality. They were designed by a master who could also paint portraits of a sharp individuality.

A reflection of the ancient aristocratic culture also lies over Angelica Kauffmann's works. A soft and sympathetic talent and a truly feminine nature, she supplemented the severity demanded by Winckelmann with a dainty addition of charming grace. *Cornelia, the Mother of the Gracchi, the Death of Alcestis, Hero and Leander*—such are the principal subjects which she treated in an insipid, affectedly coloured, and intellectual manner. The Italian Battoni's coquettish conception of the antique probably bears the greatest resemblance to her smooth, pleasing, and insinuating manner. Compared with Mengs, she has a more

ANGELICA KAUFFMANN



THE VESTAL VIRGIN

*Dresden Gallery*



sentimental and softer effect. She differs from Madame Vigée-Leburn, the aristocrat, in a certain *bourgeois* beauty, resembling those soft retouches by which a photographer makes his portraits pleasing to the public. But her *Vestal Virgin* in the Dresden Gallery, the ancestor of all the beauties whom at a later period Blaas, Viney, Seiffert, and Beischlag painted, is a picture worthy to find a place in any collection. The soft and dainty chords of colour which she touches have more in common with the Rococo than with the young *bourgeois* art of the epoch.

The two Suabians, Eberhard Wächter and Gottlieb Schick, also preserved a certain degree of excellence as regards colour, because they had studied under David. The first to carry out uncompromisingly the programme of German classicism was Carstens.

It is difficult to assume a positive position in regard to Carstens's art. To Mengs he bears a relation similar to that of Prudhon to David, or of Goethe the poet to Winckelmann the scholar. As regards the antique he is not, like Mengs, a mere adapter of Greek forms, but he lives in the classic past, and the world of the Greek poets is his spiritual home. While Mengs did not progress beyond the mere arrangement of antique motives, beyond an intellectual and learned art, with Carstens a poetic conception prevails; the free and creative reproduction of images which are not external but which live in his spirit. More than Mengs had ever succeeded in doing, he mastered at Rome the



simplicity and the distinction of Greek art, and attained a perfection of line in which archæologists saw the acme of classicism. *The Greek Heroes with Chiron, Helen before the Scæan Gate, Ajax, Phænix, and Odysseus in the Tent of Achilles, Priam and Achilles, The Fates, Night with her Children, Sleep and Death, the Ferry of Megapenthes, Homer before the People, the Golden Age*—all these prints possess what Winckelmann called the “noble simplicity and silent greatness” of Hellenic art. Reading the biography of this master, one is filled with respect for a martyr who sacrificed himself to an ideal. Standing in Rome at the grave of the lonely man near the pyramid of Cestius, one is inclined to agree with the statement of the inscription which praises him as the renewer of German artistic activity.

But is this possible? Does not Carstens’s activity rather indicate the moment in which all tradition is at an end, and the new, on a *tabula rasa*, begins; when the artist has ceased to exist, and only the author remains? One can well understand, from the standpoint of the history of culture, that in such a time of literary activity a painter like Carstens had to appear. At the time when Goethe wrote *Iphigenie*, Carstens illustrated the ancient poets; in the paper epoch he founded the paper style; at a period when all great spirits wielded the pen, a painter also wields the pen instead of the brush. But however characteristic this is, what is its significance for the history of art?

Must not the thought of the least of the old masters prevent us from counting Carstens a painter? For by seeking the value of his works exclusively in the poetic element, in invention, he forgot his own profession. While Mengs could still draw, Carstens no longer possessed this ability.

But what made his activity so important in the development of German art is that he drew the logical consequences from Winckelmann's teachings by dispensing with colour. "Colour, light and shade, do not make a painting as valuable as noble outline"; so the scholars had written, and in this colour-blindness Carstens is the true son of a new *bourgeois* age, to which the contemplation of noble colour did not yet signify an æsthetic pleasure. This linear style was the foundation of Carstens's art. While over the works of Graff, those of Edlinger at Munich, of Vogel at Dresden, and even over those of Mengs and Kauffmann, a reflection of the old and distinguished past still gleams, with Carstens the new *bourgeois* and exclusively literary art of Germany begins, and quite without colour—a "paper style." The Danish note in his works consists in the same impotence which even the creations of a modern artist like Jacobsen have: that for very dreaming he never came to action, from pure contemplation he never came to work, and from hazy enthusiasm he never came to learn.

This, then, is the great difference between French and German classicism, that in France a fragment of

the sensual, a remnant of the old culture was saved for the nineteenth century. However much he battled against his predecessors, David as a technician did not dispense with the heritage of the Rococo, and Prudhon ranks as a painter with the most delicate of the old masters. German classicism, on the other hand, deprived of all sensuality and the pure product of the brain, broke so completely with the past that it did not acquire its technical traditions, but substituted outlines and pen drawings for pictures. The cartoon, the black and white style, became for a generation the domain of German art. And by this surrender to the technical ability which had heretofore been handed down unchanged from one generation to another the future was made the poorer. It revenged itself by this, that the difficult art of painting had to be acquired anew by the German artists of the nineteenth century.

## Index

The index supplements the critical treatment in the text by the addition of the birth and death years of the artists, or, when these are not obtainable, the approximate date of their artistic activity. The dates given correspond, in the main, with those appended to the German edition. In addition to these biographical data, other entries designed to facilitate the use of the work by the student have been added; as, for example, the names of prominent individuals who have influenced the development of painting, whether as artists in other branches, like Donatello, or as patrons, like Lorenzo de' Medici, or as spiritual factors of the age, like Savonarola; and the names of modern artists, like Bocklin, frequently used for purposes of comparison. Notice has been taken of important artistic terms, such as Landscape Painting, Portraiture, Engraving, and Etching. The paintings themselves are classified under the galleries, churches, and other places in which they are situated, in so far as these are mentioned in the text, to which the name of the artist is appended. Finally the editor offers under the heading, Schools of Painting, the requisite entries for reference or study of the local and national development of the art, which the author's psychological treatment would not permit to be emphasised in the general disposition of the work.

For the purpose of easy identification, the names of the painters belonging to the period covered by Professor Muther's work have been printed in italic type.—ED.

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